



ELIZABETH VS MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

QUEENS * COUSINS * ENEMIES TO THE DEATH

BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE

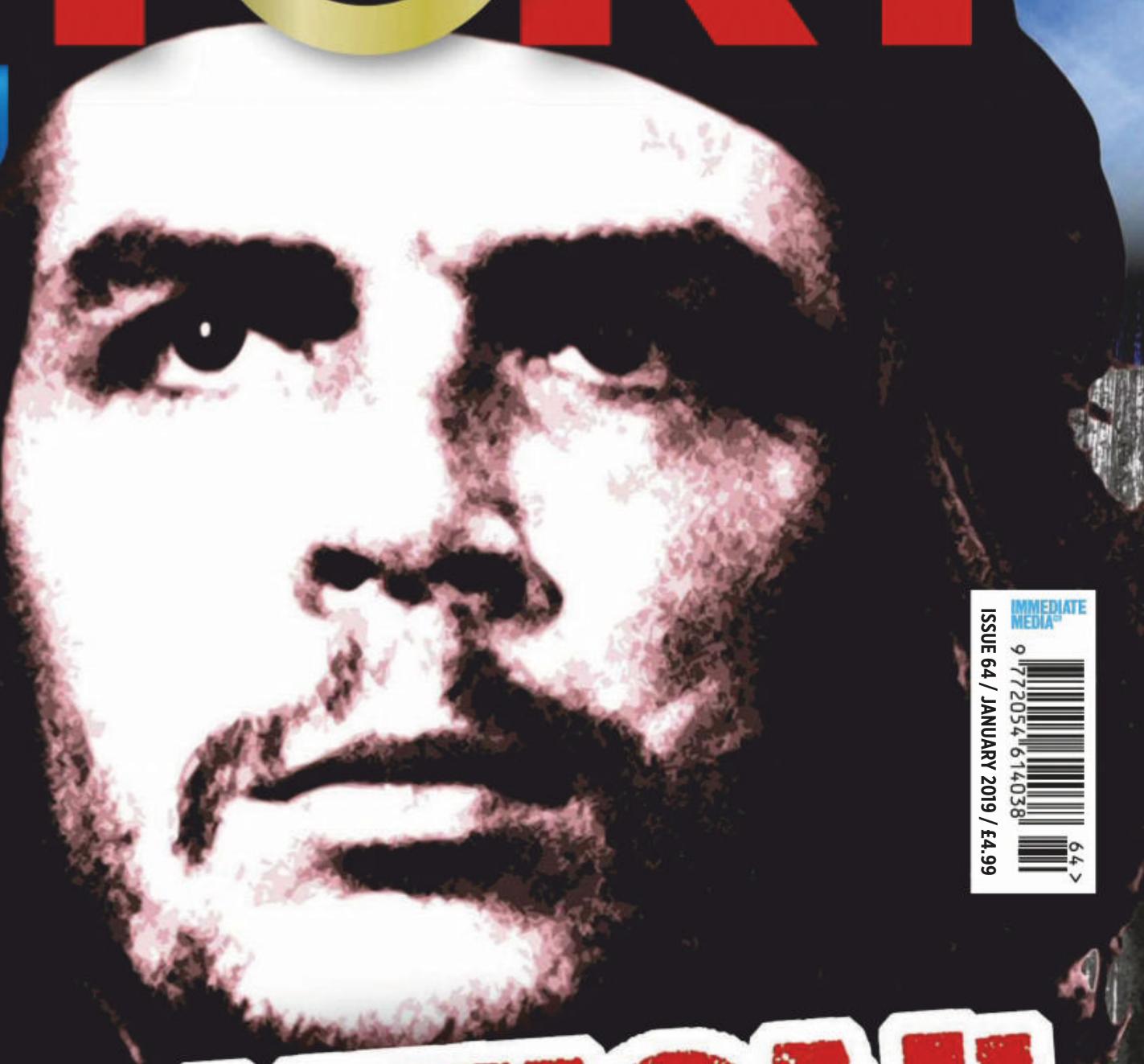
HISTORY



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& MERCURY

10 unlikely cures
from the past



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REVOLUTION!

Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and the Cuban
Revolution that changed the world

THE LITTLE
ICE AGE

How London's Frost Fairs
transformed the Thames

CONSTANTINE
THE GREAT

The Roman who
rebuilt Europe

LAUREL
& HARDY

The tears behind
the laughter



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*The aluminium cut from the Spitfire aircraft is visible around the dat window. **Only parts beyond saving in the restoration process were used.

Che Guevara's image continues to dominate Havana to this day



The times they were a-changin'



Today, **Ernesto 'Che' Guevara** is best known as one of the 20th century's most iconic images. But the events of **the Cuban Revolution**, in which he was a key figure 60 years ago, would have wide-reaching consequences – including almost bringing about a **third world war**. So how and why did the Cuban Revolution come to pass, and what were the factors that made it such a global affair, with **superpowers going eyeball to eyeball**? The story unfolds from page 56.

Rewind a few hundred years, and the superpowers of England and Scotland also faced off, as two queens – **Elizabeth I of England and Mary, Queen of Scots** – went from being cousins on friendly terms to bitter rivals. Their relationship dived to the point where **one would see the other executed**. Tracy Borman unravels the true story on page 28.

There's plenty else besides, from **Ancient Rome** to **Hollywood**, and from the **Little Ice Age** to the **Suez Crisis**.

Be sure to **write in** and let us know what you've thought of the issue, and anything **you'd like to see more of in the magazine** in the coming months!

Paul McGuinness
Editor

Don't miss our February issue, on sale 24 January

CONTRIBUTORS



Tracy Borman
Tudor historian
Tracy takes us to the courts of Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots to explore the bitter spat that rocked two kingdoms. See page 28



Paddy Ashdown
The former Lib Dem leader tells us why the historical figure he most admires is one who could not be less like him. See page 17



Philip Matyszak
An expert in Ancient Rome, Philip journeys through the life of Constantine the Great, the first Christian-friendly emperor. See page 38

THIS MONTH WE'VE LEARNED...

8

Number of lights in the first Blackpool illuminations. Turned on for the first time in 1879, the carbon arc lamps were a far cry from the neon wonders of today. See page 22.

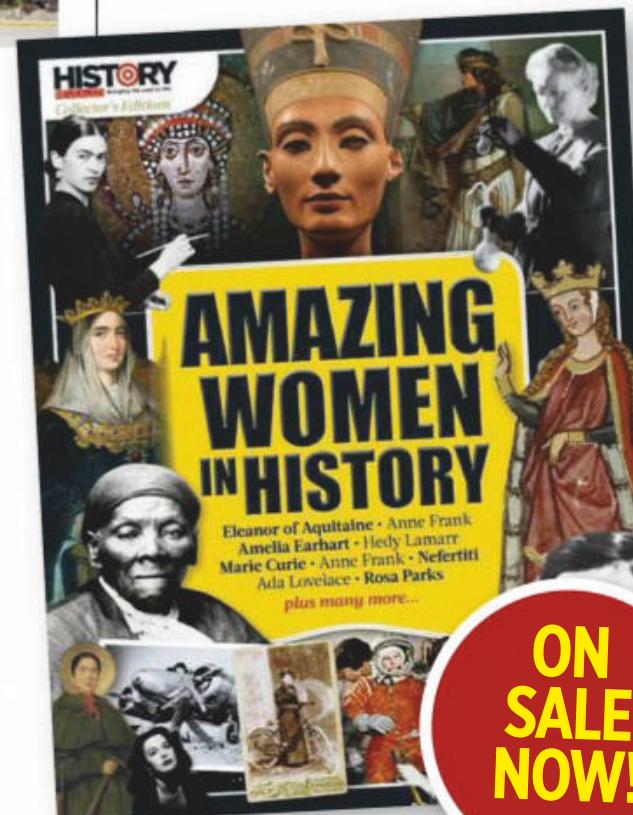
\$750

Price charged by the 'goat-gland doctor' for the dubious treatment of implanting a goat's unmentionables into a human. Predictably, he was later sued. See page 54.

3

The number of strikes it took to sever Mary, Queen of Scots' head from her body. The first hit her cheek, whilst the second failed to cut all the way through. See page 28.

THE PERFECT GIFT



**ON
SALE
NOW!**

From ancient rulers such as Nefertiti and Zenobia, through medieval giants Eleanor of Aquitaine and Isabella of Castile, to Victorian pioneers including Mary Anning and Ada Lovelace, and those who pushed the boundaries of 20th-century science, like Marie Curie and Valentina Tereshkova, these women lived amazing lives...

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28 ELIZABETH VS MARY

England and Scotland proved too small for the cousin queens



47

"Here's another nice mess you've gotten me into"



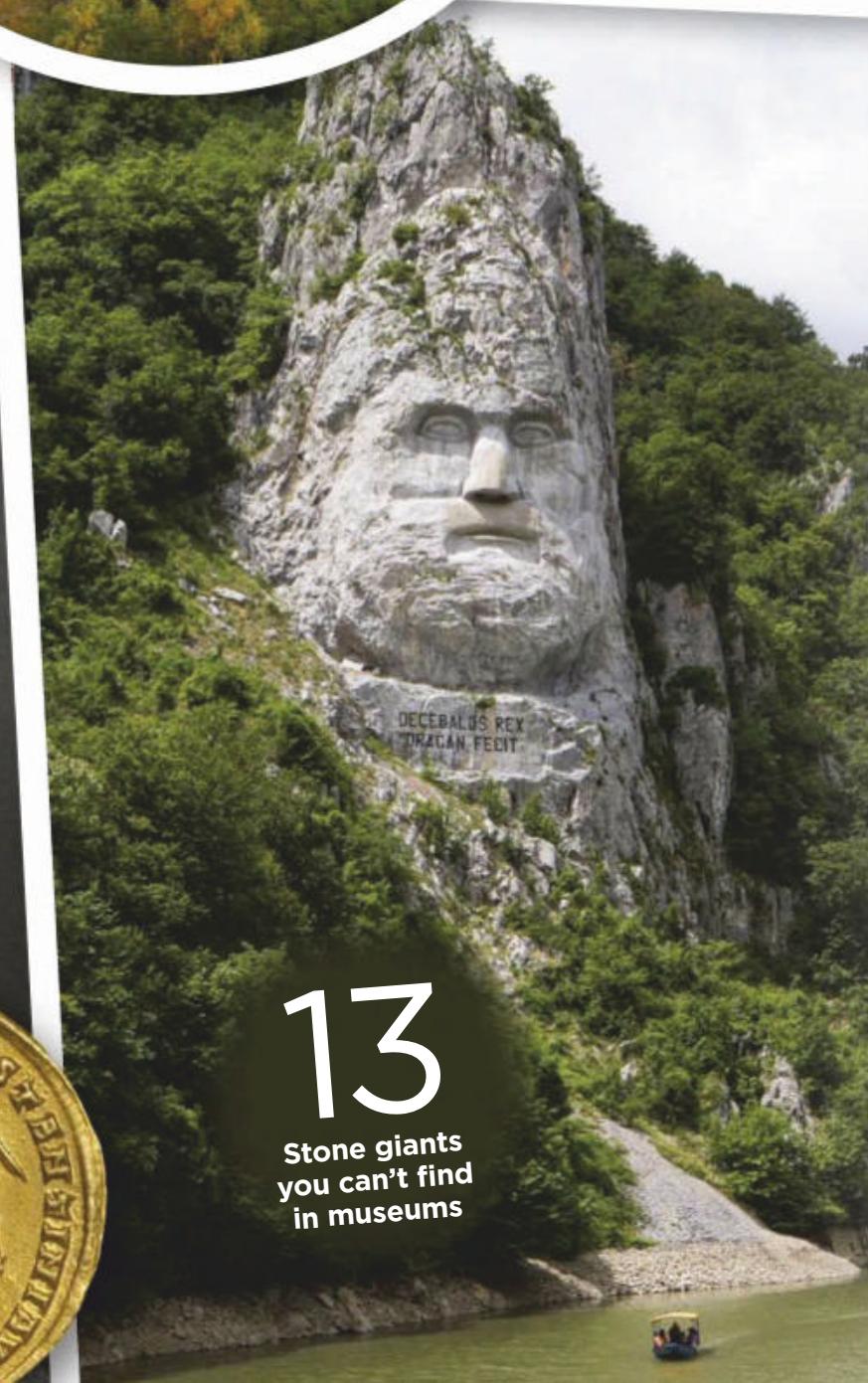
56

A lawyer and a doctor thrust Cuba onto the world stage



38

The emperor who created a 'New Rome' in the east



13

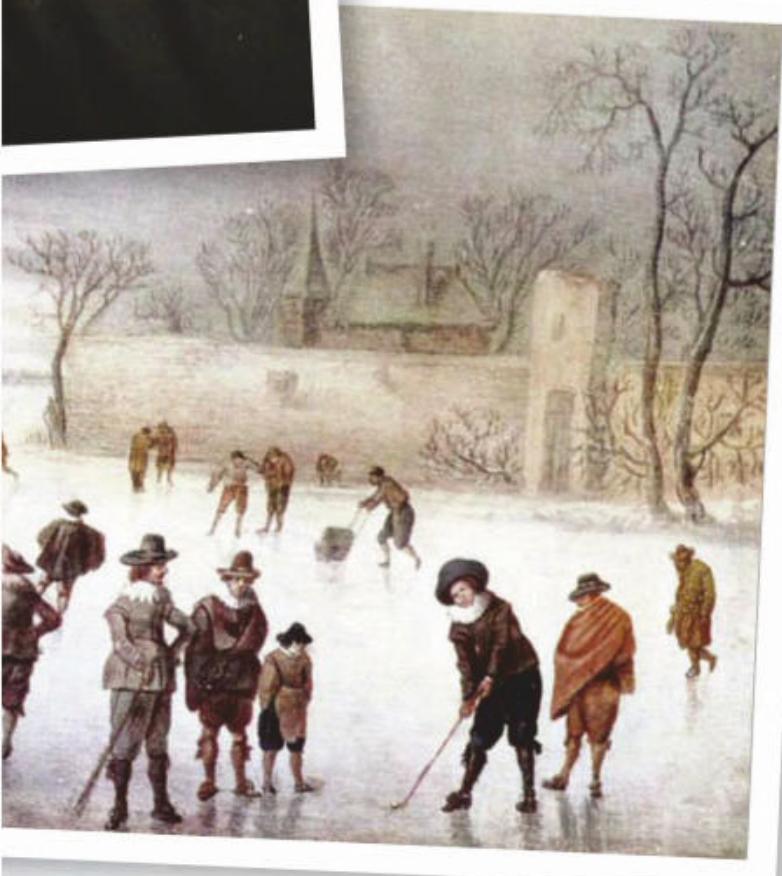
Stone giants you can't find in museums

JANUARY 2019

CONTENTS

66

The seedy underside to London's festive frost fairs



LIKE IT? SUBSCRIBE!

More details on our special offer on **p26**



REWIND

Snapshots

Barcelona falls to Franco p6

History in the News

Welsh Celtic chariot stuns experts p13

Time Piece

The must-have winter accessory p15

History in Colour

VJ Day jubilation in Piccadilly p16

Your History

Veteran politician Paddy Ashdown p17

Yesterday's Papers

The Suez Canal sparks a war p18

This Month In... 1492

The Reconquista ends at Granada p20

Time Capsule: 1879

A bright time for Blackpool p22

Graphic History

The Taj Mahal p24

FEATURES

Elizabeth I vs Mary, Queen of Scots

They should have been friends; instead, their rivalry overshadowed England and Scotland for almost 30 years p28

Constantine the Great

Did the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity make 'Europe'? p38

Laurel and Hardy's Tragic Final Tour

Beyond the japes, the comedy masters' swansong was no blaze of glory p47

Top 10: Weird Remedies

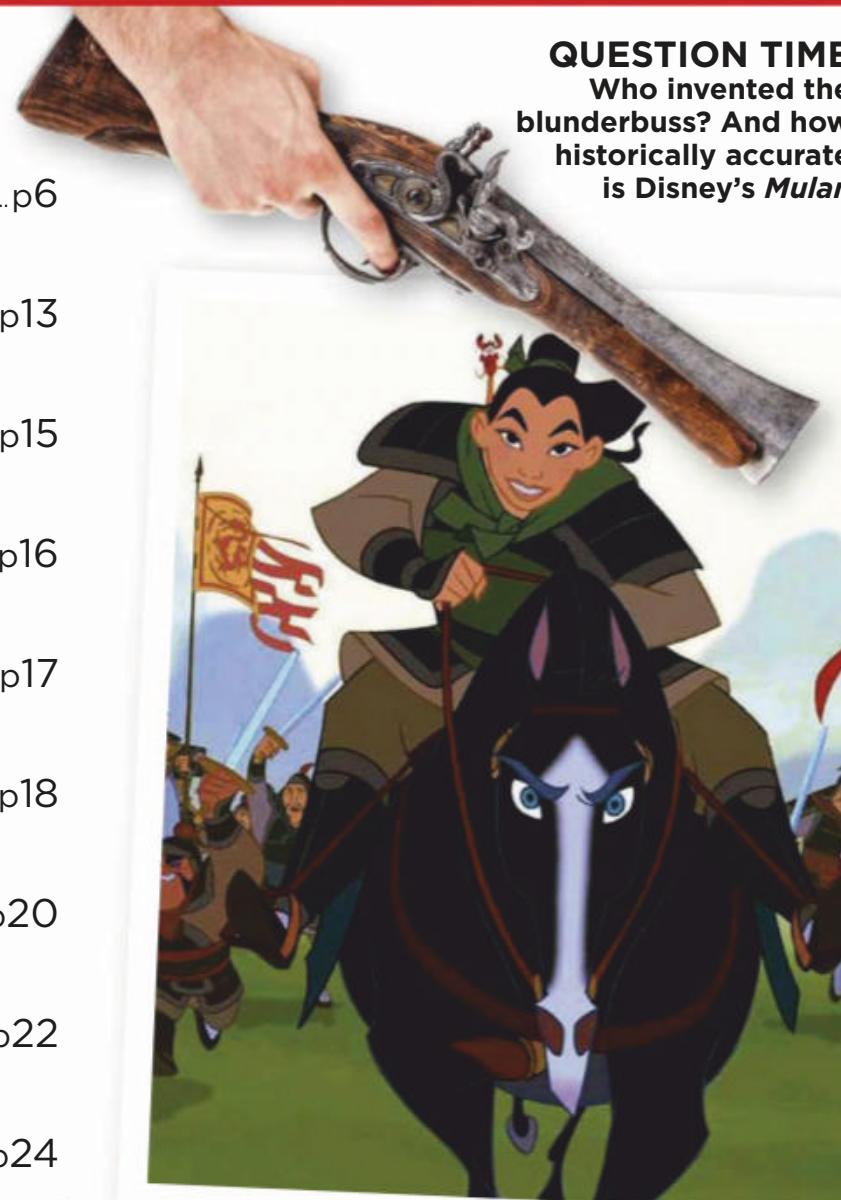
Why visit the dentist when you can mash up a mouse? p54

The Cuban Revolution

Fidel, Che and the struggle that brought communism to the West p56

London's Little Ice Age

Darkness lurks behind the jolly Thames Frost Fairs of the Victorian era p66



QUESTION TIME
Who invented the blunderbuss? And how historically accurate is Disney's *Mulan*

Q&A

Ask the Experts

Your questions answered p73

ON OUR RADAR

What's On

Our picks for this month p79

Britain's Treasures

Caerphilly Castle p84

Books

A look at the new releases p86

Postcards from the Past

Your snaps from across the globe p90

EVERY ISSUE

Letters	p92
Crossword	p95
Next Issue	p97
Photo Finish	p98



1911 PRIME TARGET

A young Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, observes the Sidney Street siege in London. Police surround a flat in Stepney in the East End after reports of criminals – wanted for the murder of three police officers a month before – hiding there. A six-hour gunfight ensues with soldiers called in, armed with superior weaponry, to aid police. The siege ends when a fire breaks out, killing the two fugitives.



DAILY
Chronic

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1939 FALL OF A CITY

Crowds celebrate in the Plaza de Cataluña in Barcelona after the capture of the city by the Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War. The city had suffered heavy bombing during the revolt against the Republican government. After the fall of Barcelona, Madrid shortly follows and Nationalist leader Francisco Franco establishes his dictatorship. The bloody war ultimately claims the lives of more than 500,000 people over nearly three years.







1963 WINTER GAMES

The Grand Match takes place on the frozen Lake of Menteith, near Stirling in Scotland. This historic curling tournament pits teams from the north and south of the country against each other, with hundreds of rinks created on the ice. The last match was in 1979; a loch needs to freeze to a depth of seven inches, which none have done since. Curling has been played in Scotland for centuries – the oldest-known curling stone dates back to 1511.

Charles I

TRAITOR, TYRANT
OR INNOCENT MARTYR?

Discover the truth behind the myths in this
award-winning account of one of the most
dramatic reigns in British history

‘Fascinating’

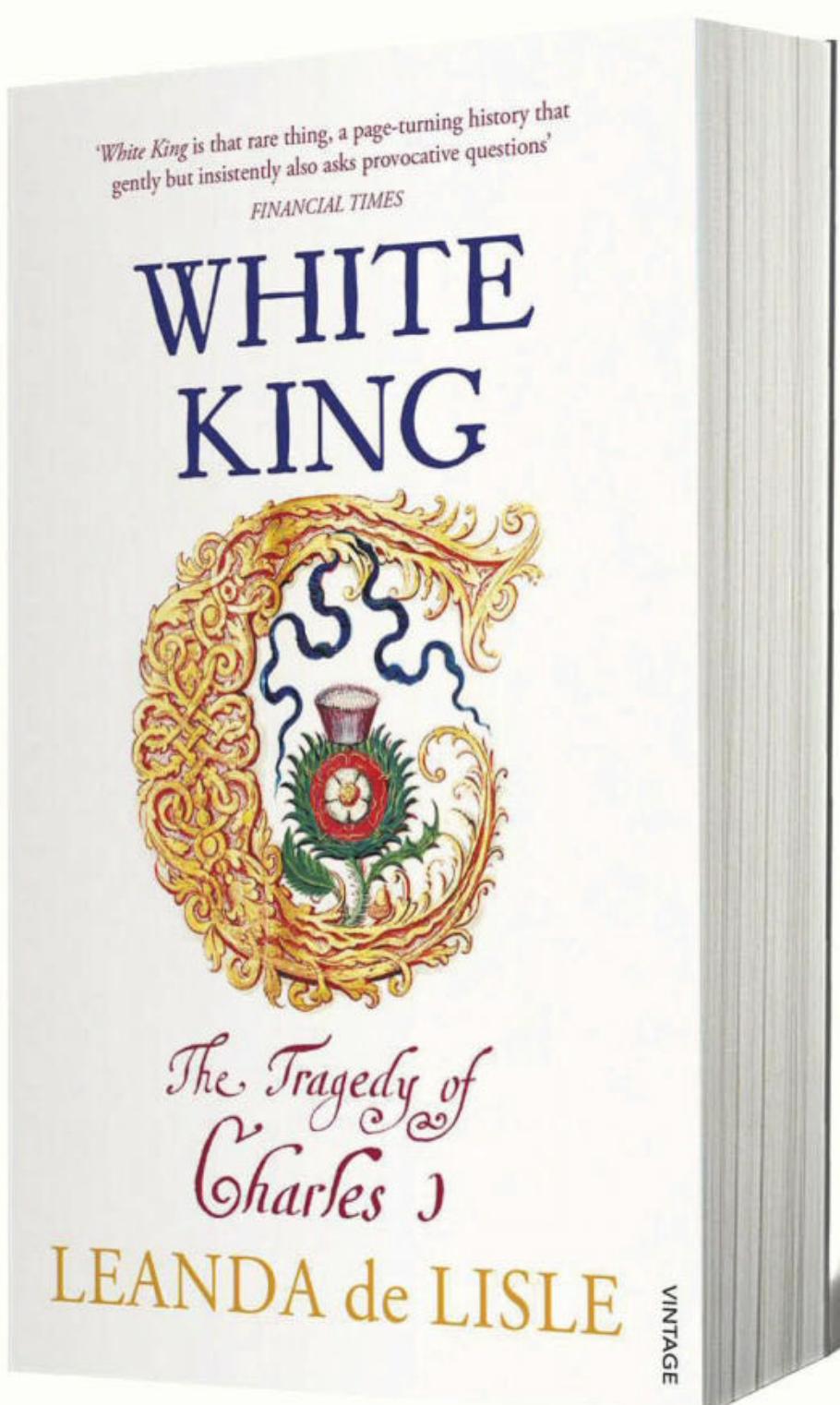
ANDREW MARR

‘Engaging, well-researched
and beautifully written’

OBSERVER

‘An impeccably researched
and thought-provoking
biography which reads as
well as a fine novel’

DAILY EXPRESS



Giving you a fresh perspective on the events and findings from history

HISTORY IN THE NEWS



WELL-PRESERVED MUMMY UNVEILED FOR AN AUDIENCE

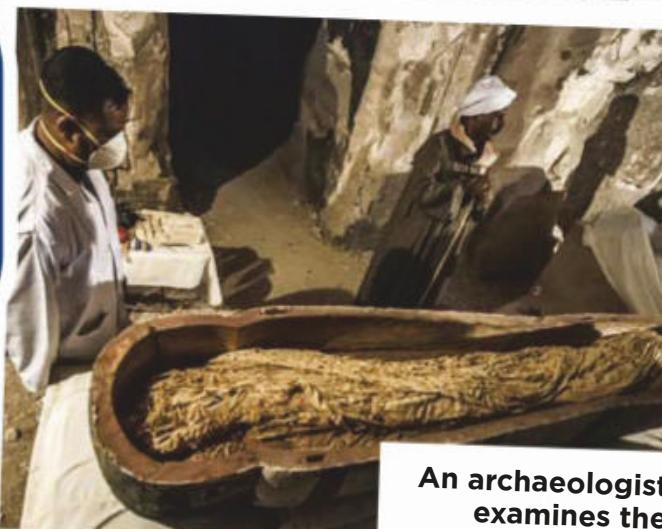
A sealed sarcophagus was opened in front of the media

Amummified woman whose remains date back 3,000 years has been unveiled at the opening of a sarcophagus in the Egyptian city of Luxor.

The sarcophagus was one of two discovered last year during a French-led project at the El-Assasef necropolis, a burial site for important nobles close to the Valley of the Kings. The first had already been examined by officials, but the unveiling of the second marked the first time that a previously unopened sarcophagus had been opened in front of international media.

Experts are trying to identify the mystery woman. Egypt's minister of antiquities, Khaled al-Anani, says: "One sarcophagus was rishi-style, which dates back to the 17th dynasty, while the other sarcophagus was from the 18th dynasty." The second period is particularly well known as it was during this time the pharaohs Ramses II and Tutankhamun both lived.

It took experts five months to unearth the tombs from under the mountains of rubble that



covered them. Alongside the mummies, other finds included funerary figurines called ushabtis as well as masks.

Dozens of archaeological finds were made in Egypt in 2018, and authorities hope this will generate more interest in the country.

Join the hunt for Egypt's lost tombs in our February 2019 issue – on sale 24 January

SIX OF THE BEST...

Enormous stone sculptures that really rock...p14



YOUR HISTORY

Former Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown...p17



YESTERDAY'S PAPERS

Suez is no paradise for Anthony Eden...p18



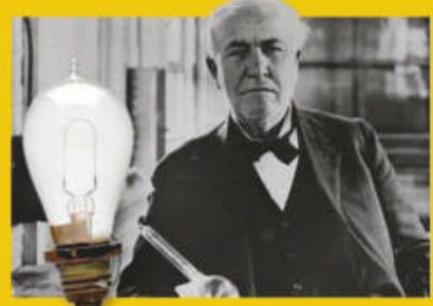
THIS MONTH IN... 1492

The last bastion of Moorish Spain falls...p20



TIME CAPSULE: 1879

Edison's bright idea changes the world...p22



IN THE NEWS

EASTER ISLAND REQUESTS RETURN OF SACRED STATUE

The figure has been part of the British Museum for 150 years

The British Museum has been asked to return Easter Island's Hoa Hakananai'a – a statue important to its people. The governor of Easter Island recently visited the museum in London and was reduced to tears at the sight of the nearly 2.5-metre-tall figure – which is believed to contain the spirit of the Easter Islanders' ancestors.

There are hundreds of sacred statues, known as moai, scattered across Easter Island. The British Museum has held this one for 150 years – since it was taken from the Pacific island as a gift for Queen Victoria, who donated it to the museum. It is believed to have been carved between AD 1000 and 1200, and currently stands at the entrance to the Wellcome Gallery.

In a meeting to discuss the repatriation of the statue, Tarita Alarcon Rapu, governor of Easter Island said: "We are just a body. You, the British people, have our soul." Further talks are planned, with the authorities of the museum



ABOVE: Hoa Hakananai'a was taken from Easter Island in 1868 – aptly, one translation of this name is 'lost or stolen friend' RIGHT: Easter Island Governor Tarita Alarcon Rapu

invited to Easter Island. A spokesperson for the British Museum commented: "The museum is one of the world's leading lenders and the trustees will always consider loan requests subject to usual conditions."

This isn't the first time that the British Museum has been asked to return an artefact in its collection. It also holds the Elgin Marbles, originally from the Parthenon, and there have been repeated calls by Greece for these to be returned. The museum has suggested that Greece does not have a proper place to display them.



It appears that attitudes towards the restitution of artefacts are shifting. In November 2018, French President Emmanuel Macron announced that France will return 26 artworks taken from the African state of Benin during the colonial period.

SIX OF THE BEST... COLOSSAL SCULPTURES

Not all of the world's stony-faced rock giants are found in museums



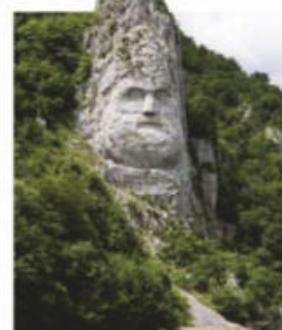
1 THE OLMEC HEADS, MEXICO

The Olmecs were a Mesoamerican ancient civilisation between 1200 and 400 BC. These stone heads, found across Mexico, are believed to represent powerful Olmec rulers.



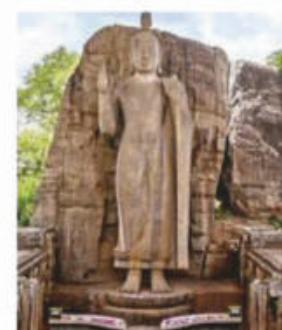
2 THE GREAT SPHINX OF GIZA, EGYPT

One of the oldest Egyptian monuments, the Great Sphinx of Giza is believed to have been created around 2500 BC. This mythical creature has a human head and the body of a lion.



3 DECEBALUS, ROMANIA

The tallest rock relief in Europe was only completed in 2004. It depicts first-century King Decebalus of Dacia (modern-day Romania) who fought for independence against Rome.



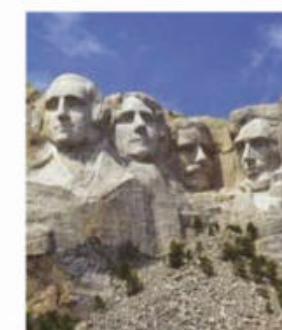
4 AKUVANA BUDDHA, SRI LANKA

At 13 metres high, this carving is the tallest Buddha statue in Sri Lanka, completed in the fifth century. The gesture the statue is portraying represents reassurance.



5 LION OF LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND

This memorial honours the 600-plus Swiss Guards killed during the French Revolution in 1792. They were protecting the French royal family when the Tuileries Palace was stormed.



6 MOUNT RUSHMORE, SOUTH DAKOTA, US

It took 14 years and 400 workers to carve the faces of US Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt into the face of the Black Hills.

TIME PIECE

A look at everyday objects from the past

WINTER? IT'S NOT SNOW BAD

Native Americans turned to tennis (kind of) to get around when the snows fell

Trekking through the snow can be a tricky business, so the native tribes of North America developed their own way to walk unimpeded. These snowshoes, fashioned from wood and animal skin, work by spreading the wearer's weight – so they didn't sink into the snow. When European explorers began to colonise North America, this invention was brought across the Atlantic. The French call them racquettes à neige due to their similarity to tennis racquets. Modern snow shoes are still made in the same shapes that the Native American's developed centuries ago.



IN THE NEWS

CELTIC CHARIOT BURIAL FOUND IN WALES

Unheard-of discovery could be from an unknown Celtic settlement

ACeltic chariot burial has been discovered in Pembrokeshire – the first of its kind in Wales. Mike Smith, an avid metal-detector for more than 40 years, made the discovery in February 2018. An Iron Age horse harness was his first find in the area and he later found bridle fittings and Celtic metalwork (*inset*). Smith knew this was significant, but when he first

contacted the National Museum Wales, experts weren't convinced: "They didn't believe me," he says.

Then an official excavation in June revealed chariot wheels and a horse's tooth – suggesting that it was indeed a chariot burial. Celtic chieftains were often buried in this manner.

The rare burial is believed to be

around 2,000 years old. "There have never been any Celtic chariot burials found in west Britain, let alone Wales," says Smith. "They are here though – luckily it was me that found this one."

Earthworks found nearby suggest the existence of a previously unknown Celtic settlement, with further excavations planned during 2019.



Mike Smith has been a detectorist for four decades



HISTORY IN COLOUR

Colourised photographs that bring the past to life

See more colourised pictures by
Marina Amaral [@marinamaral2](https://twitter.com/marinamaral2)



PICCADILLY CIRCUS, 1945

The events of 15 August 1945 prompt jubilant celebrations across the world as the surrender of Japan brings World War II to an end. On VJ Day (Victory over Japan), crowds gather everywhere from Times Square in New York City to London's Piccadilly Circus, where this American soldier delightedly holds up a newspaper announcing the Japanese submission.

YOUR HISTORY

Paddy Ashdown

The veteran politician – former leader of the Liberal Democrats, now a member of the House of Lords – talks to us about mottos, his disdain for Neville Chamberlain and how quiet persuasion changed the British Empire



Paddy Ashdown's *Nein!* *Standing up to Hitler 1935-44* explores the plots to oppose Hitler from within Germany and is available now

Q If you could turn back the clock, which single event in history would you want to change?

Neville Chamberlain's foolish agreement with Hitler to hand over Sudetenland (then part of the former Czechoslovakia) without a shot. If he had stood up to Hitler, then a coup to remove and probably kill the Führer – which was in place and ready to go – would almost certainly have succeeded and World War II would never have taken place.

Q If you could meet any figure from history, who would it be?

The poet John Donne. Apart from being my favourite poet, I think he was a wonderfully complex and contradiction-riddled person: lover and rake in his youth, religious turncoat in middle age, and a tortured but profound believer in

almost everything he had earlier rejected at the end. He was also the man who best expressed my view of the truth and how difficult it is to find.

Q If you could visit any historical landmark in the world tomorrow, where would you go?

To Kohima, in India, to pay my respects to Field Marshal William 'Bill' Slim, the greatest British general of World War II – under whom my father served. Slim's book *Defeat into Victory*, the account of how he turned headlong retreat into an astonishing triumph in Burma, is a masterpiece. It also contains one of the passages that I have used as a motto for my life: if two paths present themselves to you, always choose the most difficult one.

Q Who is your unsung history hero?

The 18th/19th-century politician William Wilberforce. By quiet persuasion, he changed a whole nation – and then the world – against its economic interests, by getting it to abandon slavery. I can think of no man less like me. But I can also think of few men or women who, through moral power alone, so altered the course of history.



Wilberforce was also a noted socialite in his early life: the future George IV once quipped he would "go anywhere" to hear him sing

"If two paths present themselves to you, always choose the most difficult one"



YESTERDAY'S PAPERS

Another timeless front page from the archives

THE SUEZ CRISIS BEGINS

A ham-fisted British and French attempt at skullduggery backfires spectacularly in Egypt, proving to the world that the glory days of the British Empire had long gone

On 29 October 1956, Israel invaded Egypt, the first step in what would become the Suez Crisis. In the following days, British and French troops were deployed to seize the Suez Canal under the guise of 'peacekeeping' – an act that drew international condemnation in itself. Then it came to light that the two Western powers had colluded with Israel from the beginning.

In July of that year, Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser announced his intention to nationalise the Franco-British Suez Canal Company. The canal, completed in 1869, connected the Mediterranean with the Red Sea via Egypt – giving Britain easy access to its colonies on the other side of the world. Egypt had gained its independence from Britain in 1922, but Britain maintained a military presence in the canal zone to protect its interests.

The nationalisation of the canal was intended to raise money for a dam to be built – which Britain, the US and Soviet Union had refused to fund. Nationalisation threatened the interests of both Britain and France, and they agreed to occupy the canal if negotiations couldn't be reached.

A plan was secretly concocted by British Prime Minister Anthony Eden and French Prime Minister Guy Mollet to use Israel as a cover

for an invasion. Israel – which had its own quarrels with Egypt – agreed to invade Sinai while France and Britain occupied the canal, seemingly in the role of mediators.

Operation Musketeer came into action on 29 October, with Britain and France calling for a ceasefire after the Israeli invasion. Nasser refused to back down and air attacks began on the Egyptian Air Force.

The reaction across the world was almost unanimously negative towards the British and French intervention. The US, anxious about potential involvement from the Soviet Union, called for an end to the conflict. Things weren't much better back in Britain, with public protests and poor oil supplies due to the closure of the canal.

A ceasefire came into effect on 7 November, and Egypt was given sovereignty of the canal by the United Nations. It had become abundantly clear to the world that Britain was not on top any more – the US and Soviet Union held much more sway – and much of Britain's influence in the Middle East was diminished. Eden's political reputation never recovered, and he resigned in January 1957. ◎

A UN vehicle flies a white flag to pass soldiers in Suez; the crisis would prompt it to create its first official peacekeeping force



Smoke billows over Port Said during the paratrooper assault of 5 November



Scenes like this were common across Britain, as people raced to fill their cars before the pumps ran dry



THIS MONTH IN... 1492

Anniversaries that have made history

THE RECONQUISTA ENDS WITH THE FALL OF GRANADA

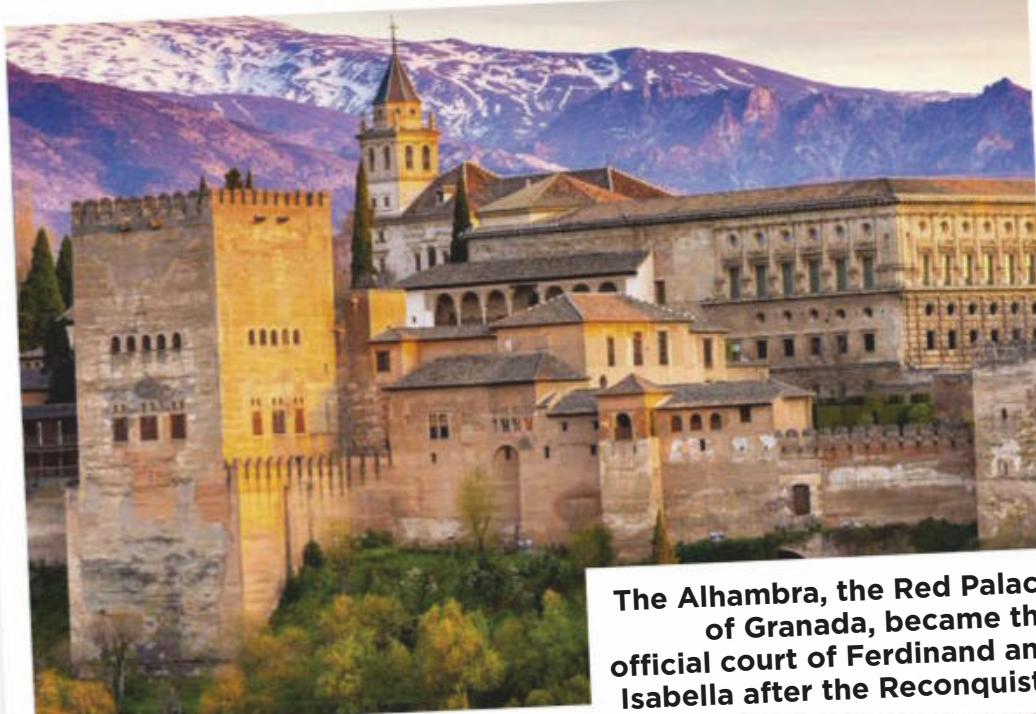
The last Moorish stronghold in Iberia collapses – ending the 800-year struggle between the Islamic caliphates and the realms of Christendom

On 2 January 1492, the Andalusian city of Granada fell to Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile – extinguishing the last vestiges of Islamic rule on the Iberian Peninsula. This was the final act of the Reconquista, the Christian ‘reconquest’ of what is now Spain and Portugal from Muslim overlordship – a struggle of intermittent skirmishes that had endured for the best part of 800 years.

It was in AD 711 that the Moors had emerged from North Africa, and by AD 718 they had overrun Visigothic Hispania almost entirely. The fight back began soon after, in either AD 718 or 722, with a Christian victory at Covadonga. In later centuries, it morphed from a simple reconquest to a battle of religions with popes at the helm, who granted indulgences to knights who fought against the Moors. Gradually, the Moors were pushed south and, by the early 1250s, the Emirate of Granada was all that remained of Islamic Iberia.

In 1246, in an act of self-preservation, Granada had become a vassal to the Christian state of Castile, which by that time occupied much of what is modern Spain. That arrangement survived for almost 250 years, despite the fact that both raided each other – and possibly thanks to a hefty annual tribute of gold trekked in from across the Sahara.

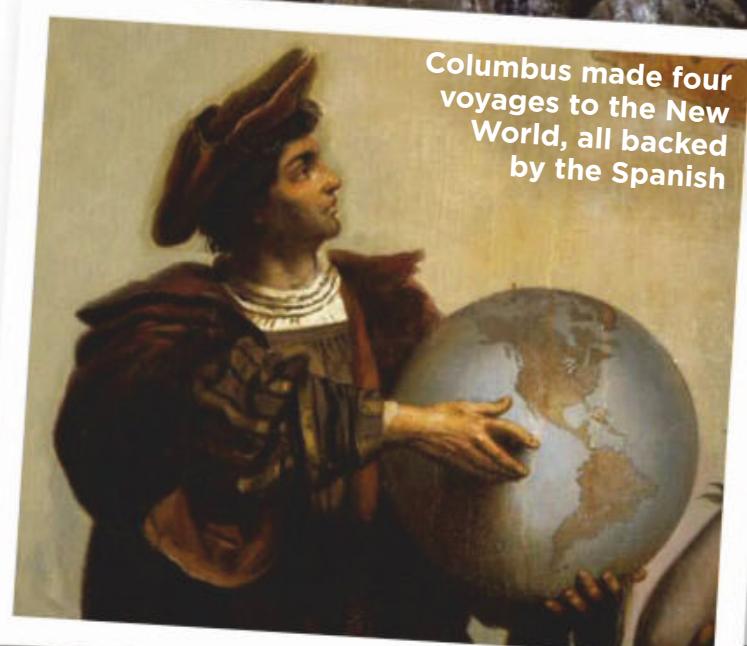
But the Emirate’s fate was sealed in 1482, when Castile and Aragon – united through the marriage of Isabella and Ferdinand in 1469 – moved into a state of open warfare. What



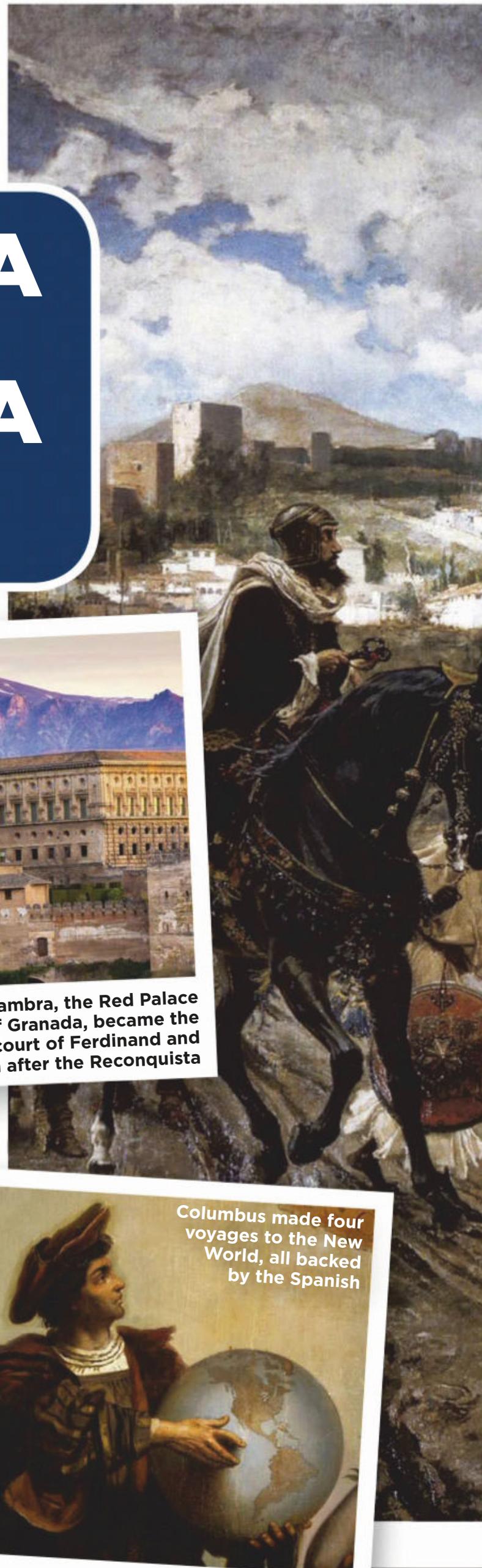
The Alhambra, the Red Palace of Granada, became the official court of Ferdinand and Isabella after the Reconquista

followed was ten years of seasonal campaigning that nibbled away at the emirate, culminating in an eight-month last stand for the Moors in the city of Granada.

With Granada regained, Spain – now free of internal conflicts – began a period of exploration and colonisation. Just months after the end of the Reconquista, explorer Christopher Columbus, sponsored by Ferdinand and Isabella, made his first voyage to the New World – becoming the first European to set foot there since the Vikings some 500 years earlier. ◎



Columbus made four voyages to the New World, all backed by the Spanish





**“You weep like a woman
for what you could not
defend as a man”**

Aixa, mother of Emir Muhammad XII of Granada, at his surrender

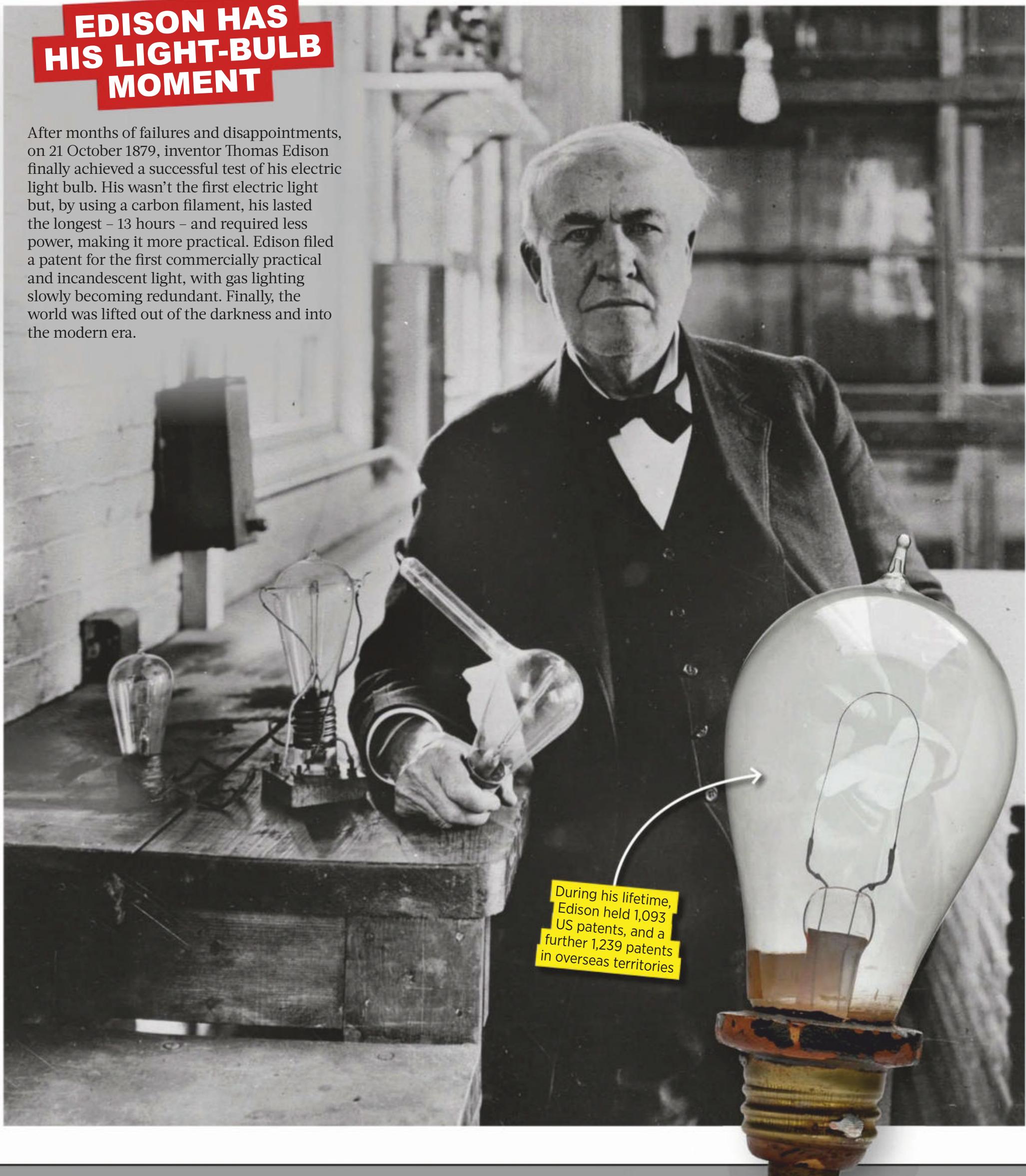
Emir Muhammad XII surrendered to Ferdinand and Isabella in a sumptuous ceremony, though he was spared the traditional indignity of having to kiss their hands

TIME CAPSULE 1879

Snapshots of the world from one year in the past

EDISON HAS HIS LIGHT-BULB MOMENT

After months of failures and disappointments, on 21 October 1879, inventor Thomas Edison finally achieved a successful test of his electric light bulb. His wasn't the first electric light but, by using a carbon filament, his lasted the longest – 13 hours – and required less power, making it more practical. Edison filed a patent for the first commercially practical and incandescent light, with gas lighting slowly becoming redundant. Finally, the world was lifted out of the darkness and into the modern era.



KNOCKING ON HEAVEN'S DOOR

The small rural village of Knock in County Mayo, Ireland, welcomes more than 1.5 million visitors each year because of the events of one evening in 1879. On 21 August, 15 villagers reported seeing the Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St John the Evangelist, a lamb and a cross on the wall of the local church. They stood watching for more than two hours in the pouring rain – reportedly the wall and the apparition remained dry. Since then, miracle cures have been reported by those who have visited the holy site.



ANGLO-ZULU WAR BEGINS

The end of the 1870s saw British High Commissioner Sir Bartle Frere dreaming of more than colonies in Southern Africa – he wanted to place the entire region under British control by creating a federation. The first obstacle to that dream (a pipe dream, as it would turn out) was the Kingdom of Zululand, a tribal polity ruled by King Cetshwayo. Actively seeking war, Frere issued an ultimatum in December 1878 that Cetshwayo couldn't possibly accept, requiring him to dismantle his army. The Zulus didn't even deign to respond, and in January 1879, Frere launched an invasion – all of this without the consent of parliament in London. Thousands of British soldiers and Zulus were killed in the six-month war that followed, ending with British victory in July at Ulundi.

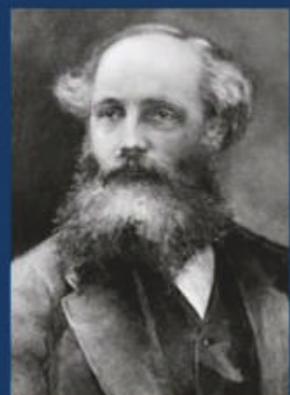


BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS TURNED ON FOR THE FIRST TIME

The Lancashire seaside town of Blackpool has been a popular tourist spot ever since the railway arrived in the 1840s, allowing the residents of the industrial North to bask in a bit of sun and sand. On 18 September 1879, eight carbon arc lamps lit up the promenade, celebrated as 'artificial sunshine'. These lights were slaves to the tide, however. When water leaked into the iron wiring pipes, the lights would go out. The illumination festival now lights up the entire seafront every year from the end of August through to November, drawing in crowds from around the world.

DIED: 5 NOVEMBER JAMES CLERK MAXWELL

Scotsman James Clerk Maxwell is best known for his work on electromagnetic theory, which remains one of the fundamental concepts underpinning modern-day physics. He died after a long illness, his name living on in the Maxwell Gap in the rings of Saturn and the unit of magnetic flux known as the maxwell.



BORN: 14 MARCH ALBERT EINSTEIN

One of the most influential physicists of the 20th century, German-born Albert Einstein struggled against the strict regime of his early education, which he felt stifled creativity. While working at a patent office, he came up with some of his greatest discoveries, including the principle of relativity.

ALSO IN 1879...

SEPTEMBER

Fulham FC – the oldest professional football club in London – is founded as Fulham St Andrews, a Sunday school team whose players are more proficient at cricket.

7 OCTOBER

Germany and Austria-Hungary sign the Dual Alliance, pledging support in the event of an attack by Russia. This would play a significant role in 1914, when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, sparking World War I.

13 OCTOBER

With the opening of Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville Hall, the University of Oxford admits its first female students. However, they weren't allowed to enrol for degrees. That right was only granted to students in 1920.

4 NOVEMBER

The cash register is patented by saloon-owner James Ritty from Ohio, who was troubled by thieving employees.

28 DECEMBER

Part of the Tay Rail Bridge in Dundee collapses in a heavy storm as a train passes over it. All of the estimated 75 people on board are killed.

GRAPHIC HISTORY

THE TAJ MAHAL

The crowning jewel of Indian architecture appears palatial – but it's actually a mausoleum

The Taj Mahal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, was the vision of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. It was a labour of love, built from white marble as a mausoleum for his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died giving birth to their 14th child. When Shah Jahan died

himself in 1666, he was interred next to his beloved. Recognised across the globe, the Taj Mahal – meaning ‘crown of the palace’ – is a perfectly symmetrical architectural marvel that combines Islamic, Persian, Hindu and Ottoman styles. It's one of India's most beloved heritage sites, welcoming eight million visitors a year.

CHOOSEN AS ONE OF
THE NEW SEVEN
WONDERS OF THE
WORLD IN 2007

THE MAUSOLEUM'S MASTERMIND

Shah Jahan, fifth emperor of the Mughal dynasty of northern India, ruled from 1628-58, during what is now considered the golden age of Mughal architecture. As well as the Taj Mahal, he was responsible for the construction of the Jama Masjid mosque of Delhi. His court saw a flourishing of literature and painting, and he was viewed as the epitome of a Muslim monarch. He had three queens during his lifetime, but of them it was Mumtaz Mahal whom he loved the most.



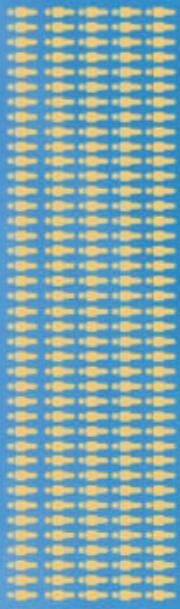
The crowning jewel of Indian architecture appears palatial – but it's actually a mausoleum

22 YEARS TO COMPLETE

The central mausoleum was built from 1631-1648, though work on the wider grounds continued until 1653

32 MILLION RUPEES

Cost of the Taj Mahal in the 17th century, equivalent to more than £830,000,000 today



28 TYPES OF PRECIOUS STONES

Adorn the Taj Mahal, including jasper, jade and sapphire; some were looted by British soldiers in the 1857 Indian Rebellion



20,000 MEN AND 1,000 ELEPHANTS

Masons, stone-cutters, inlayers, carvers, painters and calligraphers were brought in from across the empire and Asia

BUILT BY

They transported the white marble and precious gems for the Taj Mahal from India, China, Tibet, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka

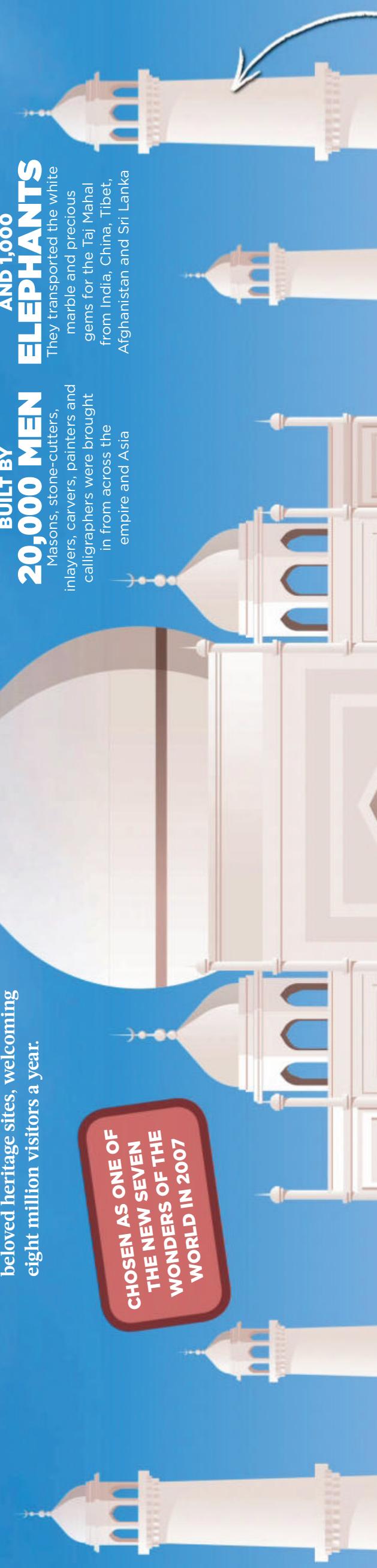
AND 1,000 ELEPHANTS

They transported the white marble and precious gems for the Taj Mahal from India, China, Tibet, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka

THE LEANING TOWERS OF AGRA?

The 130-foot minarets were built with an imperceptible tilt, so that in the event of an earthquake they would collapse outwards, saving the tomb from destruction.

180 WELLS
The Taj Mahal wasn't built on solid earth. It stands upon and wooden bases. The wells prevent the wood from drying out – if it did, the foundations would crumble.



THE BLACK TAJ

Gem merchant Jean-Baptiste Tavernier visited Agra in 1665, and from his writings sprang a rumour that Shah Jahan started work on a second Taj Mahal on the far bank of the Yamuna – this one in black marble – that was never finished because he was deposed by his son. No concrete evidence of it ever being built has been found. Black ruins were found on the opposite bank – but they turned out to be discoloured white marble.

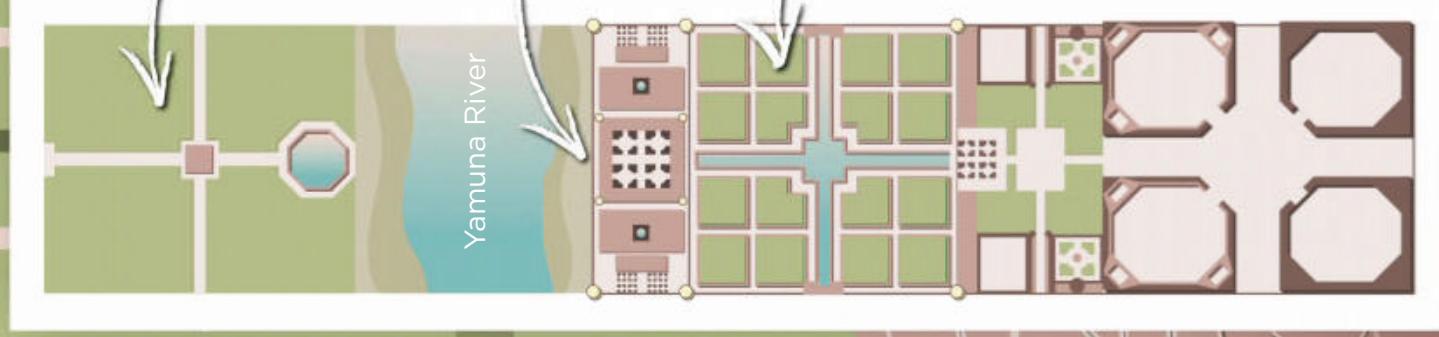
MEHTAB BAGH

Reported site of the black Taj Mahal

THE TAJ MAHAL

The mausoleum is a small part of a much larger complex that includes a mosque, gardens and gatehouses

Yamuna River



CHARBAGH

The charbagh (gardens) are split into four areas to represent the four rivers of Jannah – the Islamic paradise

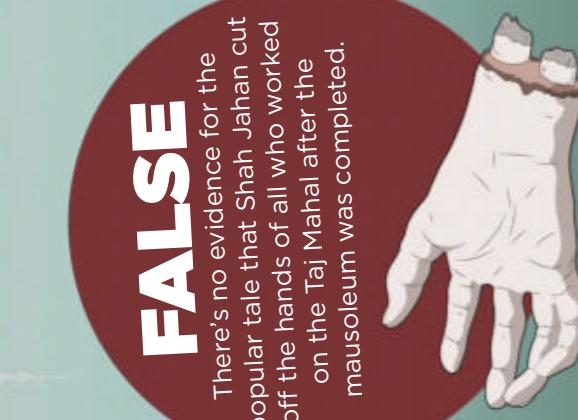
The Taj's 'onion dome' alone weighs
12,500 tonnes

FALSE

There's no evidence for the popular tale that Shah Jahan cut off the hands of all who worked on the Taj Mahal after the mausoleum was completed.

India's favourite beauty treatment (apparently) doubles as a cleanser for the Taj Mahal.
Made from cereal, lime and soil, it removes grime only 24 hours after being applied.
Unfortunately, archaeologists estimate that it would take nine years of treatments to restore the Taj completely.

THE TAJ MAHAL'S MUCK-CLEANING MUD PACK

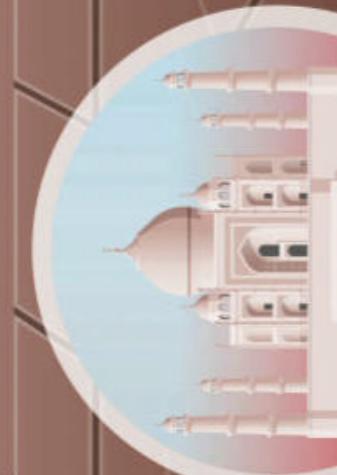


MAGICAL MAUSOLEUM

Throughout the day, it can appear as if the Taj Mahal changes colour

SUNRISE

In the morning, a pink tinge comes over the mausoleum with the Sun



NOON

When the Sun is at its highest, the Taj Mahal takes on its classic bright white appearance



NIGHT

At night, especially during a full Moon, the complex takes on a translucent blue colour

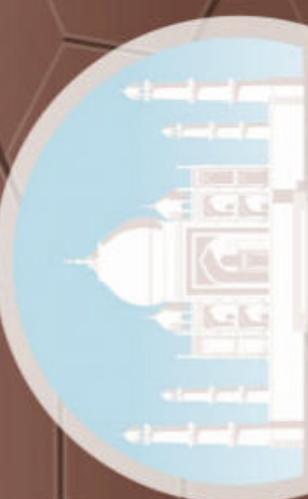


THE FUTURE

Pollution and insect excrement are adding hues of yellow, green and brown to the famous alabaster Taj, leading India's supreme court to demand, in May 2018, that the government seek international help in restoring it to its original glory

SUNSET

As the Sun sets, the complex almost appears to look bronze



HISTORY

REVEALED

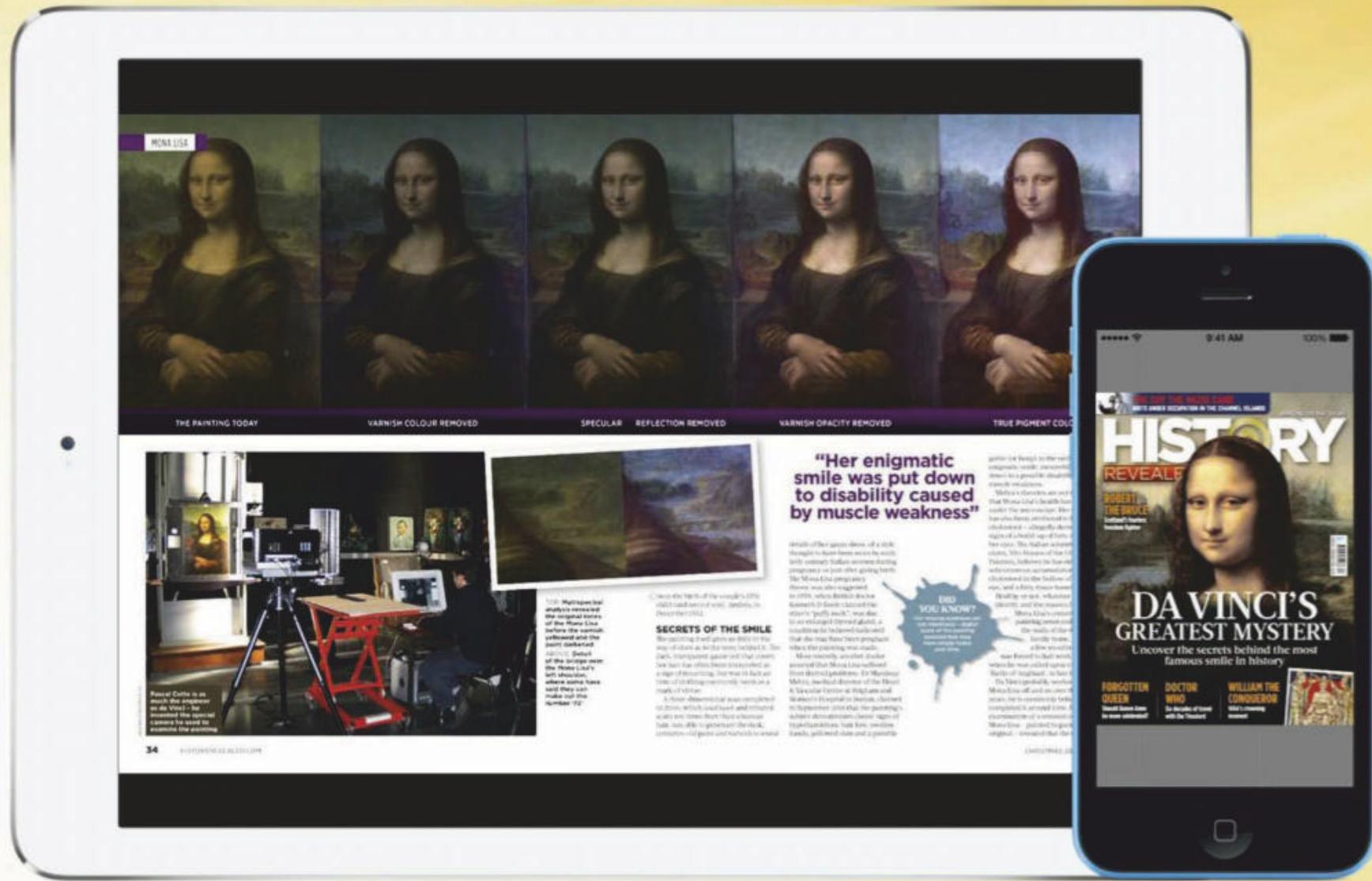
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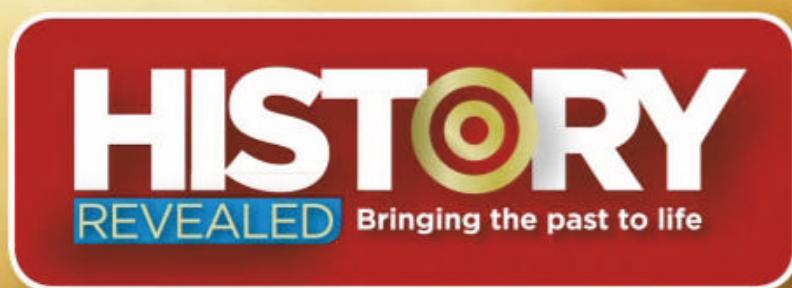


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The daughter and great-niece of Henry VIII respectively, Elizabeth and Mary, Queen of Scots didn't feel strong family ties when it came to their relationship





Tracy Borman has written numerous books on the Tudor period, including *Elizabeth's Women: The Hidden Story of the Virgin Queen*. Her latest book, *Henry VIII and the Men Who Made Him*, is out now, published by Hodder & Stoughton.

QUEENS • COUSINS • RIVALS

Elizabeth vs Mary Queen of Scots

The rivalry between the two queens was marked by imprisonment, escape and execution. **Tracy Borman** explains how personal and political ambition ignored their shared bloodlines



Mary's parents James V, King of Scots and Mary of Guise

In December 1542, James V, King of Scots, lay dying at Falkland Palace when one of his nobles arrived with the news that his wife, Mary of Guise, had given birth to a girl. According to legend, he exclaimed: "It came with a lass and it will pass with a lass!" He was referring to his Stuart dynasty, which had gained the throne of Scotland through the marriage of Marjorie Bruce, daughter of Robert the Bruce, to Walter Stewart, 6th High Steward of Scotland. James had no other surviving children and, like most of his contemporaries (including Henry VIII), he saw it as something of a disaster to leave his throne to a girl – especially one who was only six days old.

But, tiny though she was, Mary, as she was christened, also had a powerful claim to the English throne: her late father was the son of Henry VIII's eldest sister, Margaret Tudor. The fact that Henry had excluded this branch of his family from the succession came to matter less when two of his immediate successors reigned for just a short time, leaving his younger daughter Elizabeth as the sole survivor of the Tudor dynasty.

FRENCH CONNECTION

At the age of five, Mary was pledged in marriage to Henri II's son François and she sailed to France in August 1548. Vivacious, charming and pretty, the young Scottish queen soon became the darling of the French court. In 1553, the Cardinal of Lorraine wrote to tell Mary of Guise of her ten-year-old daughter's progress: "She has grown so much, and grows daily in height, goodness, beauty and virtue, that she has become the most perfect and accomplished person in all honest and virtuous things that it is possible to imagine."

Mary's beauty was universally praised. Like her mother, she was unusually tall – as an adult, she was 5 feet 11 inches –



MAIN: The young Mary, pictured here around the age of 12 or 13, was known for her vivaciousness

RIGHT: Although only 25 at the time of her coronation, Elizabeth was already a formidable character

DID YOU KNOW?

After the death of her first husband François, Mary customarily wore black, mourning his loss and that of the French crown.

"Nine years older, Elizabeth was superior to Mary in intellect and political guile"

with deep auburn hair that set off her pale skin to dramatic effect. She was also accomplished in the courtly arts of music, singing, dancing, embroidery and riding. These she greatly preferred to the more academic elements of her education.

Mary and her betrothed got on very well and everything seemed set fair when, on 24 April 1558, they finally married at the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris. In November the same year, Henry VIII's eldest daughter Mary died and was succeeded by her half-sister Elizabeth. Nine years older than her Scottish cousin, the new queen was also superior in intellect and political guile. Although she was only 25 years old at the time of her accession, the turbulence of her childhood and youth had chiselled Elizabeth into a formidable ruler. By contrast, Mary's experience in France, surrounded by adoring courtiers and every conceivable luxury, had taught her to believe that the business of queenship was easy. It would prove a fatal misapprehension, leading her to indulge her own whims to a reckless degree.



On 10 July 1559, Henri II died from injuries sustained in a joust and his 15-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter -in-law became King and Queen of France. But François died suddenly the following year. His mother Catherine de' Medici became Regent of France and Mary returned to Scotland in August 1561. Her life as a pampered princess was over. Scotland was a less hospitable climate in every respect, dominated by rapacious and ruthless nobles who viewed their queen with barely concealed disdain.

WARM RELATIONS

By contrast, Mary's relationship with her English counterpart seemed to get off to a flying start. Elizabeth assured her cousin that her dearest wish was "to unite in sure amity and live with you in the knot of friendship, as we are that of nature and blood". In response, Mary declared that she wished "to be a good friend and neighbour to the Queen of England" and stressed the natural solidarity that she and Elizabeth should share as female rulers: "It is fitter for none to live in peace than for women: and for my part, I pray you think that I desire it with all my heart."

But Elizabeth's ambassador to Scotland, Thomas Randolph, was not fooled. "Of this Queen's [Mary's] affection to the Queen's Majesty, either it is so great that never was greater to

MARY'S MARRIAGES

In stark contrast to her cousin Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, Mary married three times. Her views on marriage and queenship were deeply conventional and she was said to be content "to be ruled by good counsel and wise men" – including her husbands.

Mary's first husband was François, son and heir of Henri II of France. Their betrothal was forged when Mary was just five and the Dauphin a year younger. While Mary was tall for her age and praised for her graceful manner, her betrothed was unusually short and spoke with a stutter. But Henri II observed that "from the very first day they met, my son and she got on as well together as if they had known each other for a long time".

Henry, Lord Darnley, was an altogether different prospect. Mary declared him to be "the lustiest and best proportioned lang [tall] man that she had ever seen". The fact that

he had royal blood coursing through his veins made him even more attractive. But Darnley was also arrogant, feckless and vain, and within months of the wedding, Elizabeth's ambassador reported: "I know now for certain that this Queen repenteth her marriage, that she hateth Darnley and all his kin."

Mary's third and final marriage, to James Hepburn, 4th Earl of Bothwell, was by far the most scandalous. On 24 April 1567, just two months after Darnley's murder (in which Bothwell was implicated), he abducted Mary and took her captive to Dunbar. Although some believe that Mary was already in love with Bothwell by this time, Melville claimed that "the Queen could not but marry him, seeing he had ravished her and lain with her against her will". Bothwell swiftly divorced his wife and on 6 May brought Mary back to Edinburgh, where they were married on 15 May.



ABOVE: Mary with her young first husband, François

ABOVE RIGHT: Husband number two, Lord Darnley

RIGHT: Mary's most controversial marriage was to Bothwell





MAIN: Saoirse Ronan plays the title role in the 2018 film *Mary Queen of Scots*

RIGHT: The birth of Mary's son James put Elizabeth into a depression over the line of succession



Any, or it is the deepest dissembled, and the best covered that ever was." Sure enough, just a few days after her arrival in Scotland, Mary made clear her true intentions by dispatching her own ambassador to persuade Elizabeth to name her heir to the English throne.

And so the pattern of Elizabeth and Mary's relationship was set for the next ten years. There were numerous letters, emissaries and even plans for the two queens to meet, but they never did. And neither did Elizabeth name Mary her successor. All the while, the rivalry between them grew ever more intense, a rivalry that was personal as well as political.

FAIREST QUEEN

Nothing demonstrates the rivalry more clearly than Elizabeth's meeting with her cousin's ambassador, Sir James Melville, in 1564. Setting aside the political matters that Sir James had been sent to discuss, Elizabeth quizzed him on every aspect of Mary's personal appearance and accomplishments. "She desired to know of me, what colour of hair was reputed best; and which of the two was fairest... I said, 'She was the fairest Queen in England, and mine the fairest Queen in Scotland'."

But Elizabeth was not satisfied with such a diplomatic response, so she asked who was the tallest. When the hapless ambassador admitted that the Scottish queen had the advantage, Elizabeth snapped: "Then ... she is

"Mary tried to persuade Elizabeth to name her as heir to the throne"

too high; for I myself am neither too high nor too low."

Referring to the rival queens, the Spanish envoy shrewdly observed: "It is certain that two women will not agree very long together." Aside from Mary's claim to the English throne, another source of discord was her search for a new husband. Fearing that her cousin would marry a Catholic, the English queen put forward a number of suitable candidates – including, bizarrely, her own close favourite, Robert Dudley. But Mary chose one for herself: Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, the grandson of Margaret, wife of James IV of Scotland, and great-grandson of Henry VII of England.

Taking a husband who had the royal blood of both kingdoms coursing through his veins spelled danger for Mary's rival. But worse was to come when, in June 1566, less than a year after their marriage, Mary gave birth to a son, James. When the news reached the court in London, Elizabeth plunged into a deep depression.

Mary was unable to push home her advantage, though, because she was already beset by troubles in her own kingdom. Darnley had proved a disastrous choice as husband and most of Scotland wanted to be rid of this arrogant and volatile young man. Matters had reached a crisis point when, three months before their son's birth, Darnley had ordered Mary's beloved secretary, David Rizzio, to be dragged from her presence and stabbed to death in an adjoining room. He had then kept his wife a virtual prisoner.

PRIME SUSPECT

Mary was soon openly conspiring with a group of Scottish lords to rid both herself and Scotland of her troublesome husband. Their number included the Lord High Admiral of Scotland, James Hepburn, fourth Earl of Bothwell. When Darnley was murdered in February 1567, Bothwell was the prime suspect. However, three months later, Mary scandalised the world by taking Bothwell as her new husband. Elizabeth was quick to voice her shock and dismay in a letter of admonishment to her cousin: "How could a worse choice be made for your honour than in such haste to marry such a subject, who ... public fame hath charged with the murder of your late husband?"



Mary's second husband, the volatile Lord Darnley, ordered the murder of her close confidante, David Rizzio



Mary successfully escaped from Lochleven Castle, despite its location on an island

DID YOU KNOW?

It's been claimed that Mary was the first woman to play golf in Scotland, doing so just days after her husband's murder.



Mary was forced to sign her abdication or face execution

Almost instantly, Mary's new marriage spelled disaster for her rule in Scotland. Bothwell soon alienated the powerful lords of the political establishment, who staged a coup to oust both him and the queen. Mary was taken captive in June 1567 and holed up in Lochleven Castle for several months, during which time she miscarried Bothwell's twins. To add to her misery, on 24 July she was presented with the deeds of abdication and told she must sign or face death.

But Mary rallied and in May the following year – assisted by a powerful force of supporters – she orchestrated a daring escape from the castle set on an island in the middle of Loch Leven. However, they were swiftly put down and, together with a small band of men, she fled south to Dumfries. Realising that to turn back would almost certainly mean death, the beleaguered Queen of Scots made the fateful decision to go to England and throw herself upon the mercy of her cousin, Elizabeth.



THE MURDER OF LORD DARNLEY



This bird's-eye view of Kirk o' Field depicts the location of both Darnley's demise and burial

In the early hours of 10 February 1567, the citizens of Edinburgh were awoken by an almighty explosion. In the confusion that followed, it was discovered that the house of Kirk o' Field, where Mary's husband Darnley was staying, had been blown up by a huge quantity of gunpowder. Although there were remarkably few casualties, two bodies were subsequently found in the grounds of the house. They were those of Lord Darnley and his servant. Neither had been killed by the blast: they had been strangled or suffocated.

The shocking news spread like wildfire across Scotland and throughout the courts of Europe. It was widely expected that Mary would

hunt down her husband's killers and bring them to swift and brutal justice. But as she procrastinated, suspicions about her involvement in the plot began to be voiced. She it was who had persuaded Darnley to accompany her to Edinburgh the previous month, hinting at a reconciliation between the warring pair. It was known that she had been conspiring with a group of Scottish lords hostile to her husband, the most prominent of whom was Lord Bothwell. When Mary proceeded to marry Bothwell just three months after Darnley's death, speculation reached fever pitch.

The controversy surrounding Darnley's murder has preoccupied historians ever since, but unless fresh evidence comes to light, it will probably never be resolved.

The English Queen had her cousin placed in a series of safe houses, all well away from the court in London. Mary was assigned to the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury and his wife Elizabeth, better known as 'Bess of Hardwick'. As the months dragged on, the captive queen began to realise that there was little prospect of ever returning to Scotland. In her fury, she protested that her imprisonment was entirely unlawful: she was a queen in her own right and Elizabeth had no jurisdiction over her. In a letter to Pope Pius V, she woefully referred to "the Queen of England, in whose power I am".

TREASON AND PLOT

Although Mary was Elizabeth's prisoner, she presented an even greater threat than she had done in Scotland. Now she was within tantalising reach of the many Catholics in England who wished to overthrow their queen and place Mary on the throne. "The Queen of Scots is, and always shall be, a dangerous person to your estate," warned Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's closest adviser. Soon, plots were swarming around the captive queen and, as her frustration with her prolonged captivity intensified, Mary began to involve herself in them. They included the Ridolfi Plot of 1571, led by the Duke of Norfolk, who conspired to marry the Queen of Scots and set her on the English throne. In 1583, Sir

DID YOU KNOW?

Mary and Elizabeth never actually met, but their tombs are both in Westminster Abbey's Lady Chapel.

Francis Throckmorton masterminded an even more ambitious plot with support from Spain and France. Both were thwarted by Elizabeth's agents, but still she continued to withstand the increasing pressure to take action against Mary.

All of that changed when, in the summer of 1586, a Catholic gentleman named Anthony Babington plotted to assassinate Elizabeth and place Mary on the throne. Elizabeth's secretary, Francis Walsingham, soon heard of it and laid a trap. A channel of communication was established for Mary, whereby she



ABOVE: Anthony Babington gathers his accomplices together to formulate the plot to topple Elizabeth

RIGHT: Babington sought to assassinate the Queen and put a Catholic back on the English throne



would send coded letters hidden in beer barrels to the conspirators. Little did she know that all of these were being intercepted by Walsingham, who was patiently waiting until he had enough evidence to condemn her. The long years of her imprisonment made Mary less cautious than she had formerly been, and on 17 July she wrote to Babington, endorsing his suggestion that the English queen be "despatched" by a group of noblemen. She had as good as signed her own death warrant.

DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

Surely now, Elizabeth would have no choice but to put her cousin to death. But while she lambasted Mary in words, firing off a series of letters condemning the "wicked murderer" she had harboured in her kingdom all these years, she was slow to take any further action. Elizabeth was all too aware that in putting an anointed queen to death, she would be setting a dangerous precedent. Only after intense pressure from Burghley and Walsingham did she agree that Mary should go on trial. This

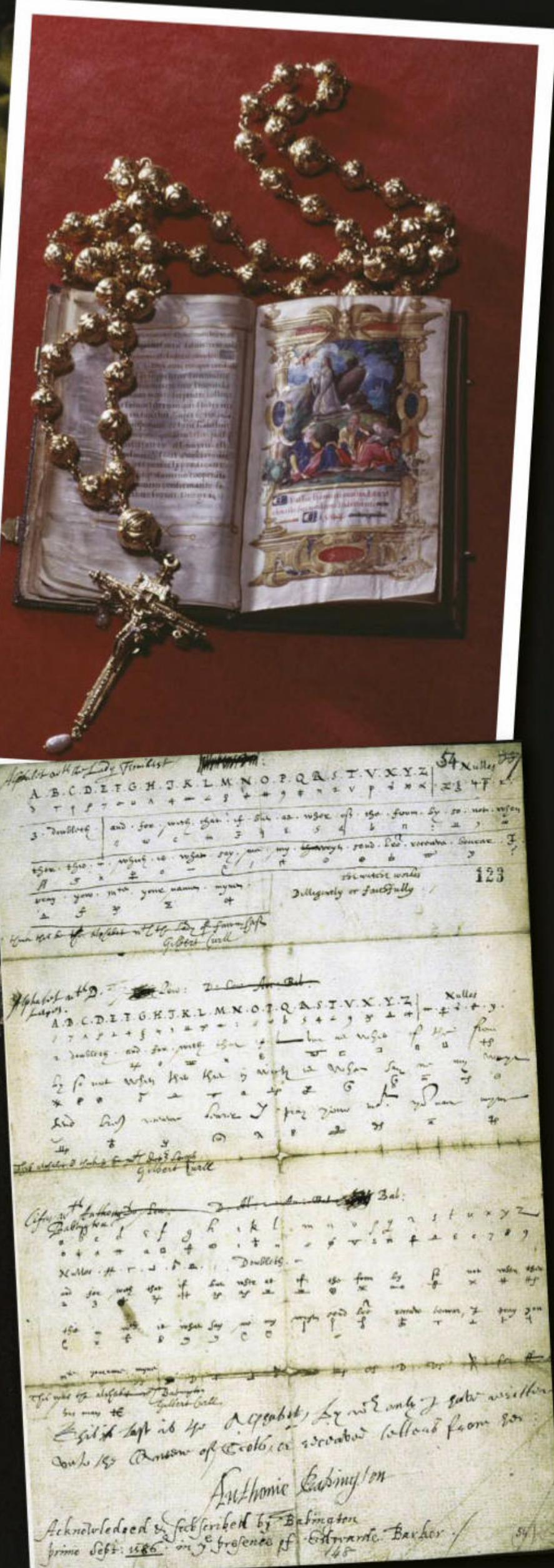


Guy Pearce as Lord Burghley and Margot Robbie as Elizabeth in the film *Mary Queen of Scots*

MARIA
D G
SCOTIAE
PIISSIMA REGINA
FRANCIAE DOTARIA
ANNO
ÆTATIS REGNIQ^E
36
ANGLICÆ CAPTIVIT
10
S H
1578



“By endorsing
Babington’s
suggestion that
Elizabeth be
‘despatched’, Mary
effectively signed her
own death warrant”



TOP: Keen to be seen as a Catholic martyr, Mary took her rosary beads with her to the scaffold

ABOVE: Despite the use of ciphers in his communications with Mary, the details of Babington's plot were easily decoded

MAIN: Mary protests her innocence at her trial as her death sentence is announced

RIGHT: Bearing Elizabeth's signature, Mary's death warrant confirms her ultimate fate

FAR RIGHT: At her execution, the first swipe of the axe actually missed Mary's neck



“Mary set herself up as a Catholic martyr by declaring that she was being put to death for her faith”



The wax death mask made from Mary's face shortly after her execution in 1587

DID YOU KNOW?

On the eve of her execution, Mary re-wrote her will so that each and every one of her servants would benefit after her death.

took place at Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire in October 1586. Although Mary defended herself with skill and dignity, the verdict was never in question. She was proclaimed guilty of conspiring towards "the hurt, death and destruction of the royal person of our sovereign lady the Queen" and sentenced to death.

Still Elizabeth wavered, and it was not until 1 February that she finally signed her cousin's death warrant. Her secretary William Davison wasted no time in dispatching it to Amias Paulet, who immediately set about making preparations for the execution. Mary took the news of her fate calmly, with "a stable and steadfast countenance", determined to set herself up as a Catholic martyr by declaring that she was being put to death for her faith, not for treason.

She spent the night before her execution praying devoutly, a crucifix in her hand, and consoled her weeping ladies by telling them "how signal a mercy God was showing her in rescuing her from the power of so bad a woman as the queen of England".

On the morning of 8 February 1587, Mary, Queen of Scots mounted the scaffold in the great hall of Fotheringay Castle. She was barely recognisable from the beautiful woman who had captivated the world in her younger days. An

eyewitness described her as: "round shouldered, of face fat and broad, double chinned ... borrowed hair".

But still she had the presence and charisma that drew all eyes to her. Ever one for theatrical gestures, when her ladies took off her outer gown, it revealed an under-dress of scarlet, the colour of martyrs. Mary then proclaimed her status as an anointed queen and, one last time, stressed the responsibilities that she shared with her cousin as a fellow sovereign, woman and 'sister'.

FATAL BLOW

When Mary lowered her head onto the block and gave the signal that she was ready for death, the executioner struck at her neck with his axe but missed and instead sliced into the side of her face. "Lord Jesus, receive my soul," Mary exclaimed, at which the executioner again hacked at her neck, but still did not sever it. It was only with the third blow that Mary's head finally fell upon the scaffold. When the axeman stooped to pick it up, the head fell away and he was left holding only Mary's wig.

In the increasingly macabre farce, Mary's little dog then scurried from where he had been hiding under her dress. As the 18th-century historian John Nichols later wrote, the dog "laid itself down betwixt her head and body, and being besmeared with her blood,

AFTER MARY

Upon being told that her cousin had been executed, Elizabeth was "in a manner astonished". The following morning, she flew into an explosive rage, screaming out against the execution "as a thing she never commanded or intended". But she was fooling no one. Philip II declared: "It is very fine for the Queen of England now to give out that it was done without her wish, the contrary being so clearly the case".

Mary had called upon the Catholic powers to avenge her death. The very next year, the greatest of them took her at her word. In May 1588, Philip II launched his Armada against England, ostensibly in Mary's name. This was the greatest threat that England had faced since the Norman invasion more than 500 years before. But when Elizabeth emerged victorious, it transformed her into the Gloriana of legend.

Mary would have the last laugh, though. Elizabeth may have gloried in her status as the Virgin Queen, but it left her with no direct heir. When she lay dying at Richmond, still protesting that she had never actually ordered Mary's execution, she was forced to concede that her throne would pass to her closest blood relative: James VI of Scotland – the son of her old rival.



With the Spanish Armada approaching, Elizabeth stirs her troops against the Catholic threat of Philip II

was caused to be washed, as were other things whereon any blood was".

Mary, Queen of Scots, the woman who had plagued her cousin Elizabeth for almost 30 years, was finally vanquished. But it would soon become obvious that she was just as dangerous to the English queen dead as she had been alive. ☀



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Was a lengthy imprisonment and execution a harsh way to deal with Mary, Queen of Scots?
Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Once he gained control of the entire Roman Empire, Constantine set about an ambitious programme of reform



CONSTANTINE THE EMPEROR WHO CREATED EUROPE

Constantine I wasn't only the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity, but also a ruler who unified and hugely strengthened the empire. **Philip Matyszak** evaluates the achievements of the man seen as the first modern European

Only one Roman emperor is called 'the Great', and that emperor is Constantine. Today we mostly associate Constantine with the Christianisation of his empire, yet even if he had remained steadfastly pagan, Constantine would still deserve his title. Few men have had such a dramatic and lasting effect upon the destiny of an entire continent.

Constantine came to power when the fate of Rome hung in the balance. The efforts of his predecessors had pulled Rome out of the desperate struggle for survival, which today we call the Third Century Crisis. However, if the worst was over, the battle was far from won. It would fall to Constantine to stabilise the new world order that became known as Late Antiquity.

Although the deeds of Constantine were exhaustively documented by contemporary historians, the man himself remains an enigma. Few of Constantine's biographers have been unbiased. Early Christian writers portrayed Constantine as wise and benevolent. There was a backlash against this in the early modern era, when Constantine was depicted as a vicious, backstabbing political opportunist who slaughtered allies and family alike in a ruthless struggle for power. These historians even saw a cynical political ploy in Constantine's embrace of Christianity – a religion he took to late and imperfectly understood.

EARLY YEARS

Constantine was born in AD 272 in the Roman province of Upper Moesia, in modern Serbia. When he was 21 years old, his father Constantius, a successful administrator and general, was made Caesar in the Tetrarchy of Diocletian. As part of that dynastic arrangement, Constantius had to put aside Constantine's mother Helena and marry Theodora, daughter of the emperor Maximian.

In AD 305, Constantius became co-emperor with a man called Galerius. Constantine had previously been a competent subordinate of



Although this Rubens painting depicts Constantius appointing his son as his successor, this wasn't how Constantine was named as Caesar

One of the earliest-known representations of the Chi-Rho, or Christogram



Galerius, but now became a hostage for his father's good behaviour. When given grudging permission to join Constantius on campaign in Britain, Constantine fled to his father's side. He was there when Constantius died in AD 306, in Eboracum – the city of York in modern England.

Constantine's troops immediately proclaimed him as Caesar, though this violated the more meritocratic Tetrarchic system. Constantine went on to legitimise his standing in the eyes of his army by defeating a Frankish invasion of Gaul. The Frankish leaders were captured

and, in an unprecedented display of savagery, their two kings were thrown to the beasts in the arena.

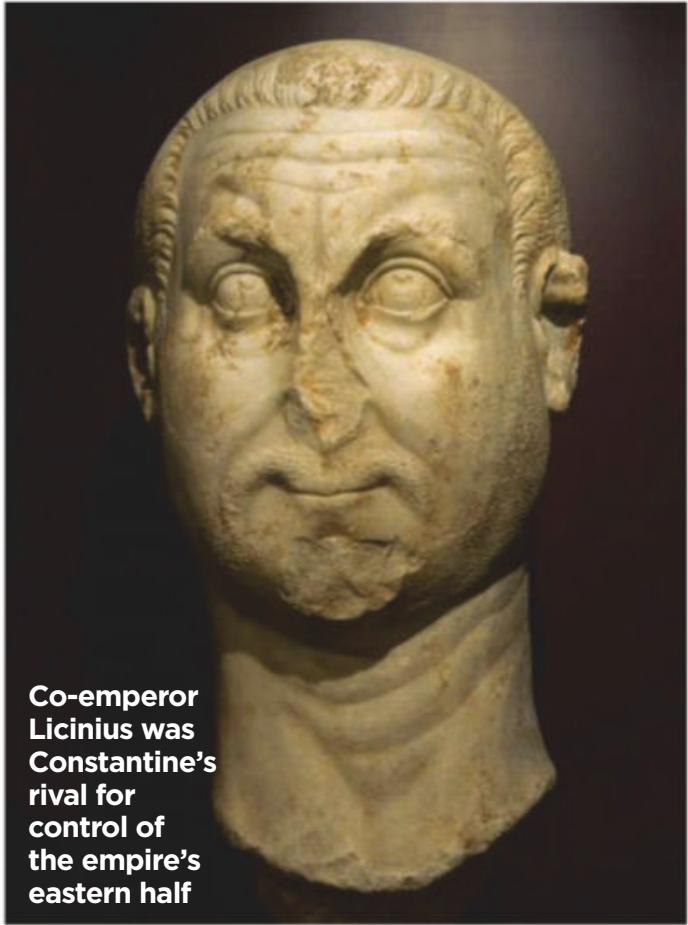
Constantine's usurpation of the title of Caesar left no place in the tetrarchy for Maxentius, the son of the former emperor Maximian. Consequently, Maximian himself came out of retirement and attempted to seize control of Constantine's army. The coup failed and Maximian committed suicide.

By AD 311, Constantine was in control of the west and a new emperor called Licinius ruled the east. In the meantime, Maxentius had seized control of Italy. While his advisers – and even his soothsayers – felt that Maxentius was too strongly entrenched, Constantine marched against him anyway. Maxentius had the larger army and came out of Rome to challenge Constantine at the Milvian bridge.

Here, for the first time, the army of Constantine carried the labarum, a banner inscribed with the superimposed Greek letters X (chi) and P (rho). Together these read 'Chr[ist]'. According to later texts, the Saviour himself told Constantine in a dream to construct this banner and to place the chi-rho emblem on the shields of his soldiers. Either divine intervention or bad generalship by Maxentius gave a quick victory to Constantine.



Diocletian introduced the tetrarchic system of succession. It didn't last long



Co-emperor
Licinius was
Constantine's
rival for
control of
the empire's
eastern half



The speedy victory over
Maxentius demonstrated
the strength of
Constantine's ambition

Therefore it seems ungrateful that there are no Christian symbols on the arch that stands beside the Colosseum in Rome commemorating Constantine's victory. However, that monument was commissioned by the resolutely pagan senate – and is constructed mostly of materials recycled from the reigns of Hadrian and Trajan.

EASTERN AMBITION

Supreme in the west, Constantine turned his malevolent attention upon his co-emperor in the east. The two emperors had previously co-operated amiably. Licinius had married Constantine's half-sister Constantia, and the pair thrashed out their differences in a meeting in Milan in AD 313 – a summit famous for the so-called 'Edict of Milan'. This is often

misunderstood as the 'edict' that made the empire Christian, though it actually did nothing of the sort. There may not have even been an official pronouncement, but merely mutual agreement that, as the contemporary writer Lactantius says, "everyone be given the freedom to worship as he wishes, and nothing detract from the dignity of any religion".

That said, Constantine was now a promoter of Christianity (he had earlier been a worshipper of Sol, the Unconquered Sun). As relations between the two emperors deteriorated, Licinius allegedly began to discriminate against Christians. This was either deliberate provocation, or largely fake news propagated by Constantine to legitimise his aggression in the civil war, which began in AD 320. Both sides

considered the war a struggle between the old pagan values and upsurging Christianity.

In battle after battle, though often outnumbered, the Christians carried their sacred labarum to victory. Eventually Licinius surrendered on condition that his life be spared. Constantine agreed, but once Licinius had become a private citizen, Constantine had him arrested and executed. While he was about it, Constantine also disposed of his nephew, Licinius' son.

Constantine was now free to shape the empire however he wanted. There was much to be done. Rome's frontiers everywhere were under threat, the administration was disorganised, and the economy was still a mess. Violent religious disagreements – often the visible face



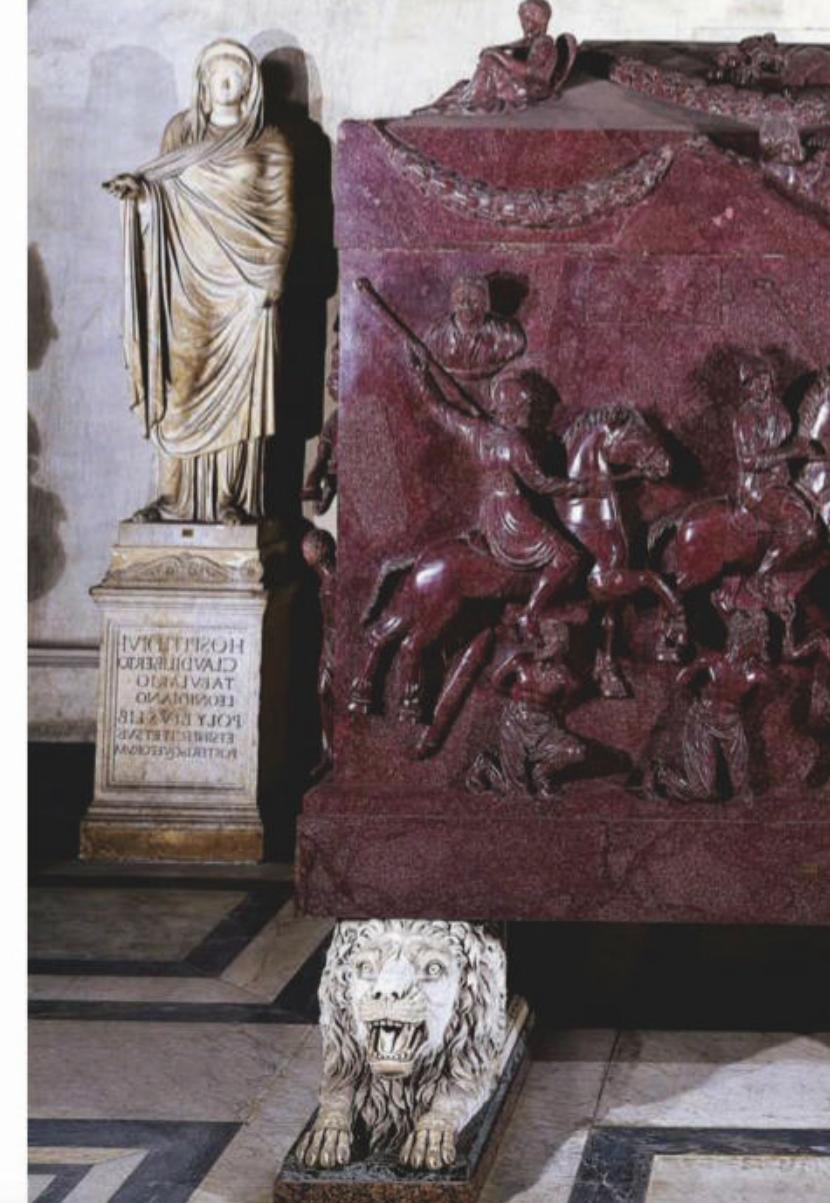
"Few men have had such a lasting effect on the destiny of an entire continent"



The Arch of
Constantine in
Rome salutes the
victory over
Maxentius



The Council of Nicaea drew up the key tenets of Christianity



ABOVE: The sarcophagus of Constantine's mother, Saint Helena of Constantinople

BETWEEN: The solid-gold solidus was the chief currency during Constantine's rule



of deeper social rifts – convulsed Roman society. Constantine had to start earning his sobriquet of 'the Great'.

Constantine began by banning Christians from taking part in the (pagan) state religion – not that Christians wanted to, but the ban eased tensions over Christian non-participation. Constantine wanted social harmony, and this meant enforcing religious harmony. He tried to establish conformity between the wildly different forms of contemporary Christian belief, notably by calling a council of bishops to the eastern city of Nicaea. There the basic principles of Christianity were thrashed out in a statement known today as the Nicene Creed. This doctrine remains fundamental to Christian liturgies today.

As emperor, Constantine was in the ambiguous position of simultaneously being a keen promoter of Christianity and the official head of the state's pagan religions. He used this situation to his advantage; temples of the state religion were declared to be imperial property.

For more than a millennium, gold and silver that would have otherwise circulated through the imperial economy had been slowly

converted to dedicatory offerings by the pious and locked away in temple storerooms. Meanwhile, starved of coinage, imperial mints had churned out ever more debased currency, leading to rampant inflation. Constantine unsentimentally turned over these temple treasures to be minted into hard cash.

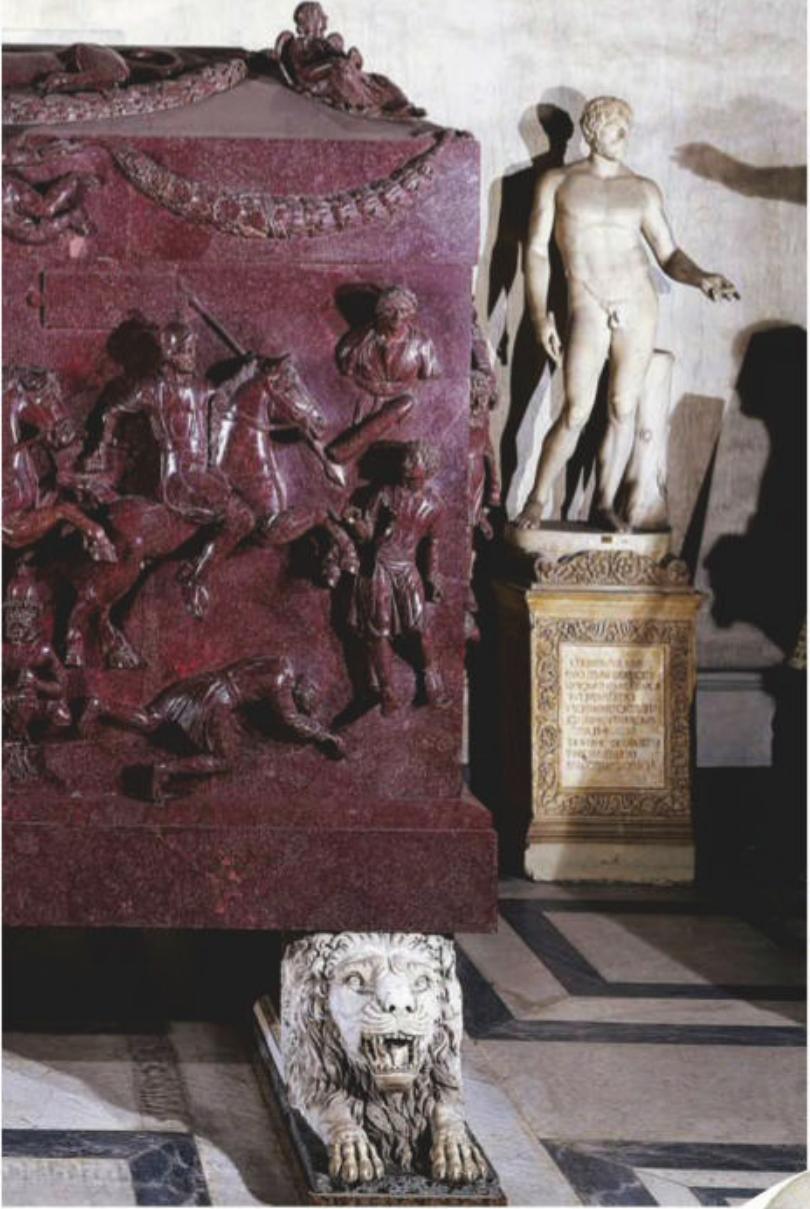
His main coin was the solidus, 4.5 grams of (almost) solid gold. There were 72 solidi to the Roman pound (Libra) and thereafter currency was measured in librae, solidi and denarii. These later became pounds, shillings and pence (£.s.d.) and even today the pound sign is a stylized letter 'L'. Soldiers are so called because they take the 'Queen's shilling' (solidus reginae).

ORGANISING THE EMPIRE

Constantine was very aware that the main threat to his life came from his own army. Over the previous century, more emperors had died in military coups than from any other cause. In fact, of recent emperors, only Constantius, Claudio Gothicus (plague) and Diocletian had died naturally. To maximise his chances of dying in bed, Constantine made several changes.

Firstly, he slowed the trend of giving provincial governorships to non-senators. Instead he turned the process on its head, cleverly making senators of provincial governors, thus retaining capable subordinates but gaining a loyal senate. However, Constantine kept senators from military command, as this might have proved too tempting for the overly ambitious.

In military affairs, Constantine built upon the reforms of his predecessor Diocletian. Even as a more flexible military style evolved to combat new and more sophisticated enemies, legionary armour became both lighter and simpler. This was partly because many detachments now operated far from legion bases capable of maintaining and repairing complex armour, and partly because Constantine's army relied more on heavy cavalry.



The old Praetorian Guard had fought against him in Italy, so Constantine disbanded this unit. His army began the gradual separation into frontier guards (*limitanei*) and a field army of *comitatensis* with elite units called the *palatini*. More barbarian units were recruited, which fought under their own commanders in their traditional style.

Thanks to his successful early campaigns in the west, Constantine could focus on securing the east. The Dacia region had earlier been abandoned due to a shortage of troops to defend it, but Constantine aimed to wrench this lost province from the hands of the occupying Goths.

He first allied with the nearby Sarmatian tribe and, when the Goths submitted after taking heavy casualties, then turned on his Sarmatian allies and beat them into surrender too. While he failed to regain all of Dacia, he succeeded to the extent that the modern country is called Romania, and the native language is recognisably Latin-based.

Constantine also planned a major campaign against the Persians. Though his sickness and death led to the cancellation of this attack,

"Constantine's domestic life was worthy of a good soap opera"



knowledge of the preparations kept the Persians carefully non-provocative.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Like many Roman emperors, Constantine's domestic life was worthy of a good soap opera. His mother was a saint. Literally. Saint Helena of Constantinople embarked on a highly publicised pilgrimage to the Holy Land, founding churches as she went along. One such church was – according to a near-contemporary writer Socrates Scholasticus – founded on the site of the Holy Sepulchre, leading to the discovery of the True Cross, on which Jesus was crucified. Helena died in AD 330 and her magnificent sarcophagus is now in the Vatican museum.

Helena's death was probably hastened by anguish at the execution of her grandson Crispus. Crispus was the son of Constantine and the otherwise unknown Minervina, who was either his first wife or a concubine. The subsequent relationship between Crispus and his later stepmother

Fausta has, ever since, been the subject of lurid speculation.

Crispus fought with great distinction in the war against Licinius, and was widely assumed to be heir-apparent to the empire. Yet in AD 326, when Constantine was on his way to Rome to celebrate the 20th anniversary of his accession, Crispus was suddenly arrested on unspecified charges and promptly executed. All official record of Crispus was destroyed.

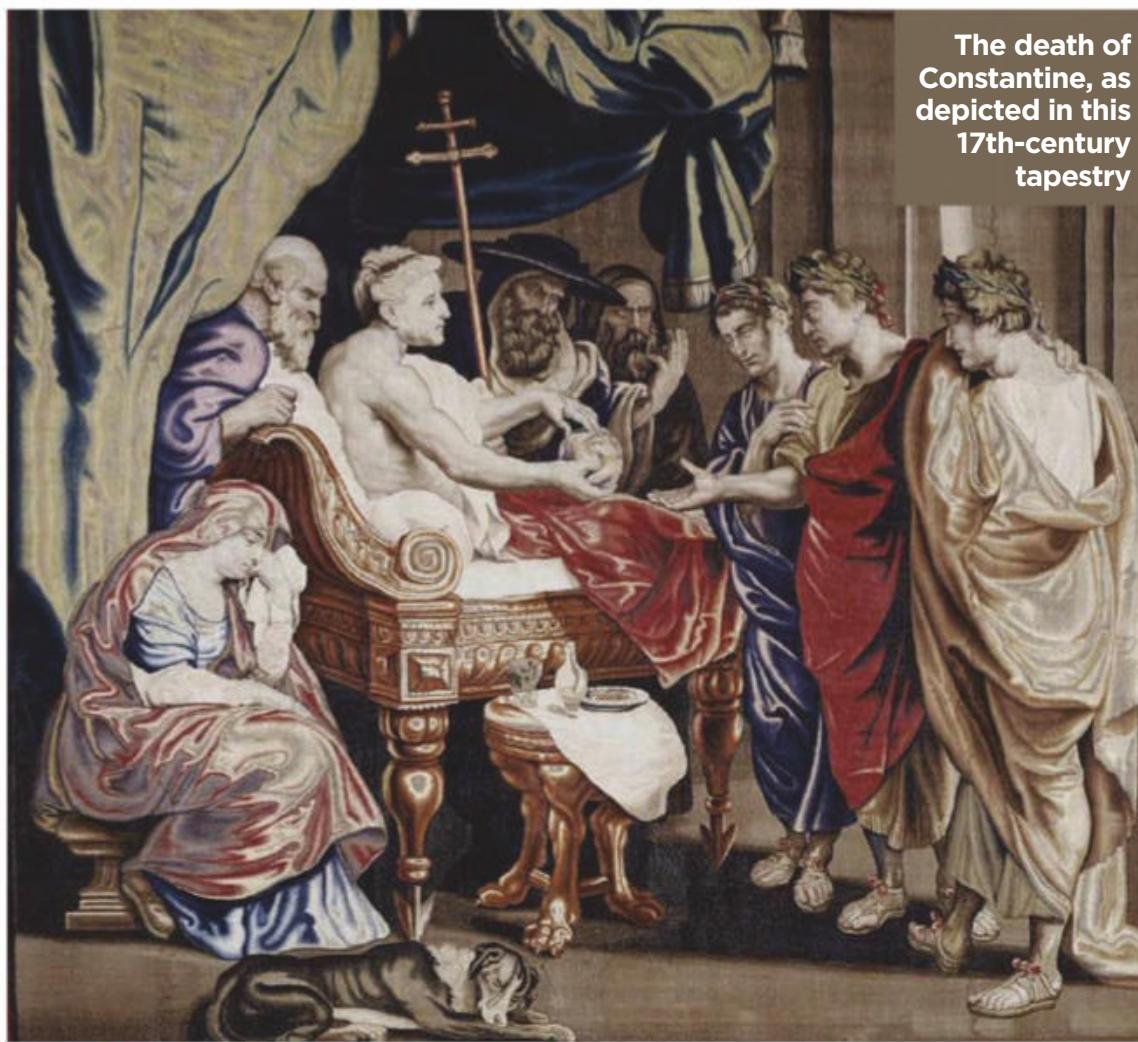
Later that year, Constantine's wife Fausta was also executed. Were the pair illicit lovers? Did the two plot a coup together? Both theories have been proposed. It is notable that, in later years when they became emperors, the sons of Fausta never retracted the official condemnation of their mother.

In AD 324, Constantine founded a new, Christian capital for the empire. After considerable deliberation, he chose the existing city of Byzantium, a Greek colony founded in 650 BC. Unlike Rome, Byzantium was well situated strategically, being located near the military danger zones of the Danube and Syria. To say that Constantine's 'New Rome' flourished is to put it mildly. After the fall of the Roman west, Byzantium – or Constantinople, as it became known – was the centre of imperial government for the next thousand years.

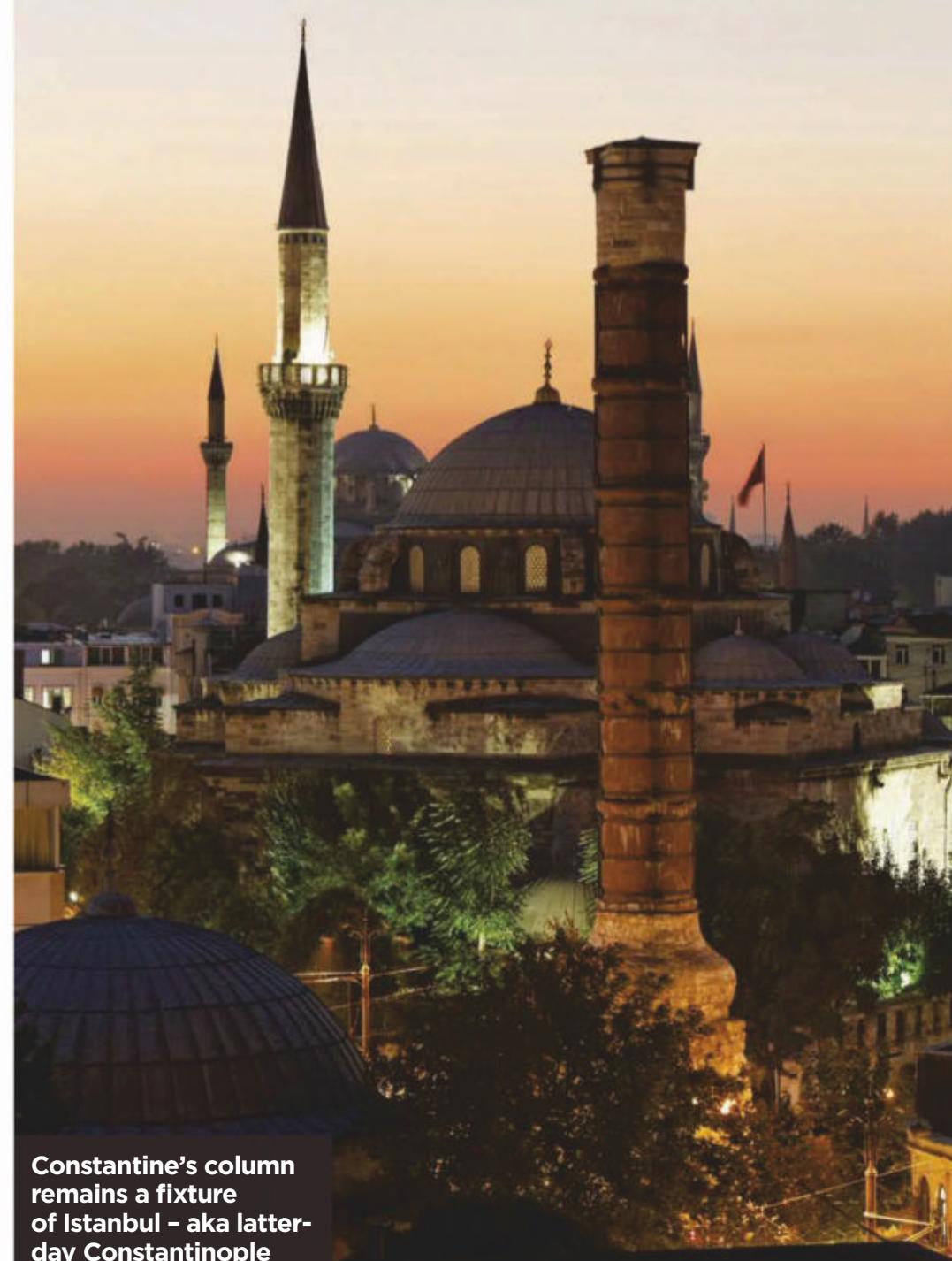
ABOVE:
Constantine's wife Fausta, whose execution he ordered in AD 326

RIGHT: For more than seven centuries after the time of Constantine, Constantinople was Europe's wealthiest city





The death of Constantine, as depicted in this 17th-century tapestry



Constantine's column remains a fixture of Istanbul – aka latter-day Constantinople

In the spring of AD 337, Constantine fell gravely ill. He had put off baptism until then, perhaps because being baptised in one form of Christianity would alienate followers of the others. (Despite Constantine's efforts, the church was still riven with conflicting ideas, especially about the nature of Christ.)

In the end Constantine was baptised by a pro-Arian bishop; that is, one who believed that Jesus was separate from the Father and not part of a single Trinitarian being. Constantine first wished to be baptised in the River Jordan. Then, as his condition deteriorated, he tried to return to Constantinople, but died on the journey. He was 65 years old. He was buried in the resting place he had carefully chosen in the Church of the Twelve Apostles. Today, after the ravaging of Constantinople by Crusader and Ottoman conquerors, the location of that church is unknown.

Constantine did not merely change the destiny of Europe. Without him, there wouldn't be a 'Europe' as we know it today. For centuries, Roman civilisation was protected in the east by Constantinople, which stopped barbarian hordes from crossing the Bosphorus. Then, in later years, Constantinople and the crumbling Byzantine Empire held back the Muslim armies, allowing Europe to slowly regain its population and economic strength. When Constantinople finally fell, the Ottoman armies thereafter advanced as far west as Vienna. Had Constantinople not held the line until 1453, the eastern invaders might well have entirely overrun Europe before then.

Secondly, until the Edict of Milan and Constantine's unwavering support thereafter, there was no guarantee that Christianity would take hold in the west. Christianity was

at one point just as strong in the Sassanian Persian empire, but has never been more than a minority religion in the region. Yet after the political disintegration of the west, Christianity was the intellectual and spiritual force which gave Europe its identity as 'Christendom'. And it was an explicitly Christian coalition that eventually threw back the Ottoman Muslims at Vienna in 1683. ◎

GET HOOKED

BOOK

Philip Matyszak has written numerous books on the Roman Empire. His most recent is *24 Hours In Ancient Rome: A Day in the Life of the People Who Lived There* (Michael O'Mara Books, 2017)

The Donation of Constantine

One of the reasons for the extraordinary power of the Church in medieval Europe was because Rome and most of western Europe 'belonged' to the Pope. In gratitude for being cured of leprosy by Pope Sylvester I, Constantine gave to the papacy Rome, Italy and all the western provinces. In his generosity, the emperor also handed the Pope estates

elsewhere in the empire, and sovereignty over other sees (dioceses) of the Church in Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch.

The document recording this 'donation' was later shown to be a blatant forgery (it did not even get the dates right), but by then the bishops of Rome had gained a primacy which later Popes have never relinquished.



Constantine hands over significant territories to Pope Sylvester I

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Ancestors' names don't always appear in the records as we might expect. As well as using wildcards and playing around with the phonetic and standard surname filters to look for variant spellings, you can leave the name boxes blank, entering just a keyword, year of birth and selecting a county – particularly useful for identifying name variations.

Going Further

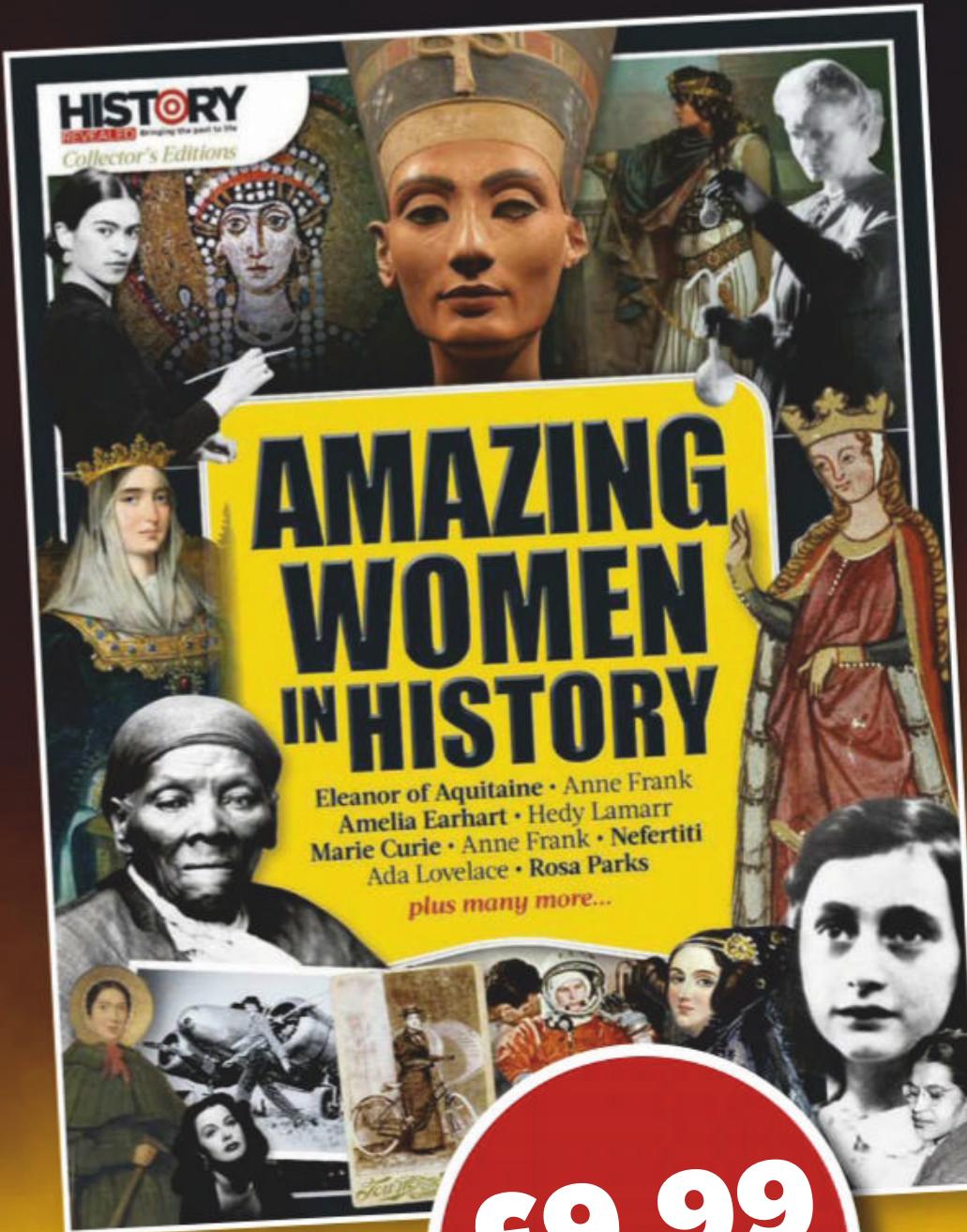
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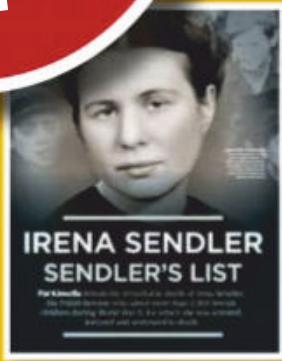
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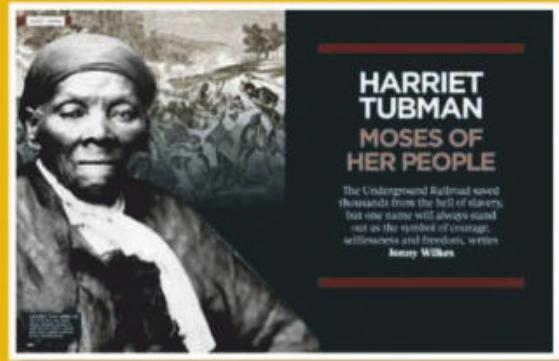
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The inseparable pals
are all smiles on
arrival in London in
the autumn of 1953



LAUREL AND HARDY'S TRAGIC FINAL TOUR

As *Stan & Ollie*, starring Steve Coogan and John C Reilly, hits the cinemas, **Jonny Wilkes** shines a spotlight on what really happened on the 1953 theatre tour by history's greatest double act

The Boys sailed into Cobh Harbour, in Cork, Ireland, on 9 September 1953, not expecting their arrival to cause a fuss. After a smooth voyage, with calm seas all the way from New York City, the pair hadn't thought to make a big publicity event of when and where they would be returning to Europe. But despite their best days being solidly behind them, the great Laurel and Hardy were still beloved comedy icons. The surprise spectacle that welcomed them was nearly overwhelming.

"The love and affection we found that day in Cobh was simply unbelievable," wrote Stan Laurel, the thin one, to a friend. "There were hundreds of boats blowing whistles and mobs and mobs of people screaming on the docks." The whole town, it seemed, came to greet them and schools had been specially closed so the children would not miss out. Laurel later received a letter from someone at the Bank of Ireland "telling me that all the staff, due to the excitement, left the bank wide open to come and see us, then realising, they all rushed back!"

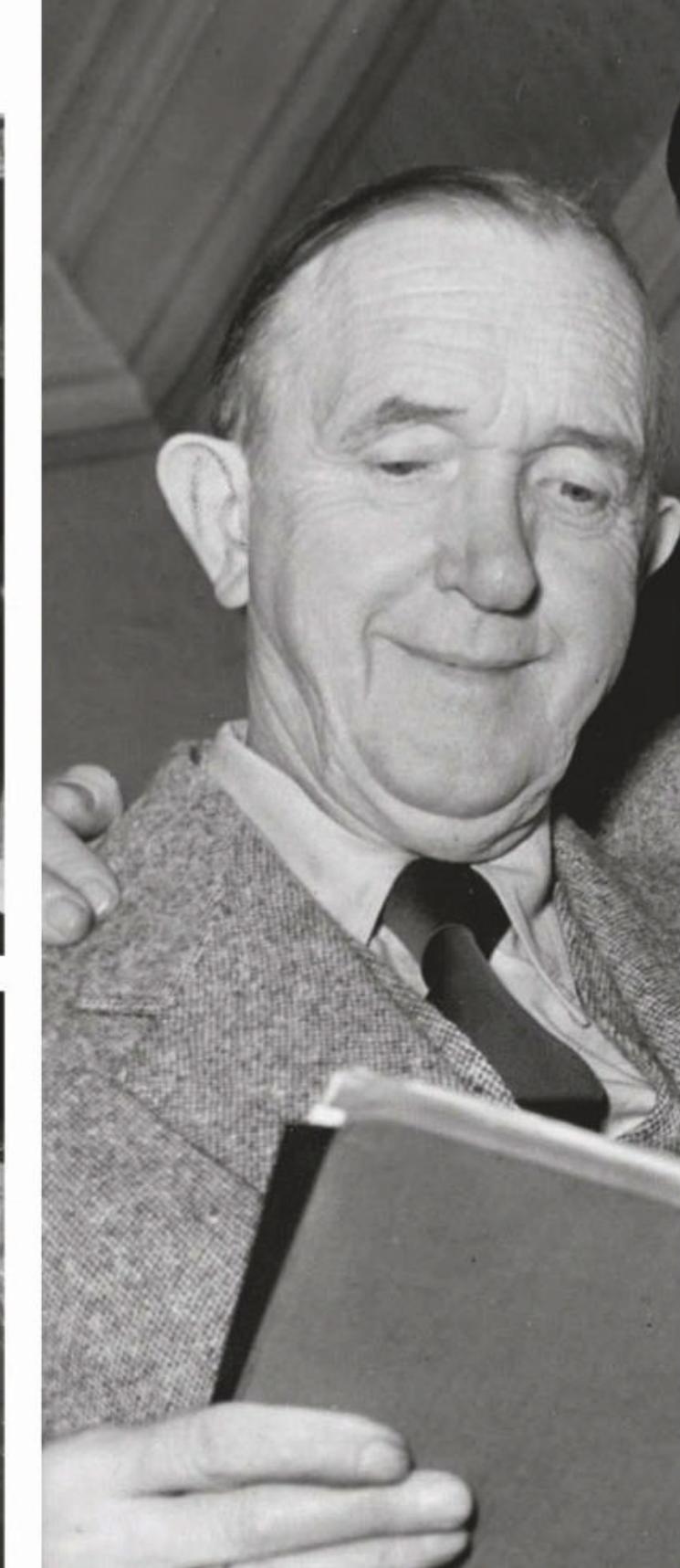
It all became too much when, as Laurel wrote, "all the church bells in Cobh started to ring out our theme song *Dance of the Cuckoos* and Babe [Hardy] looked at me and we cried. I'll never forget that day. Never."

So began a demanding – and ultimately doomed – theatre tour of Britain and Ireland in the most encouraging of circumstances. This must have brought back much-appreciated happy memories of previous visits. Laurel and Hardy had toured at the height of their fame in 1932, the year they won their only Oscar for the uproarious short *The Music Box*, which sees the duo attempt to deliver a piano up a toweringly long flight of stairs.

BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

In 1947, a six-week run of stage shows was met with what could be described as hysteria as Stan and Ollie were swarmed, sometimes crushed, by crowds wherever they went. In Liverpool, mounted police had to be called to hold back fans. The tour, which featured a performance for George VI and the young princess Elizabeth, proved such a success that it was extended into other countries in Europe.

By 1953, however, there was no denying that the pair, both now in their sixties, did not command the global adoration they once did, nor had the health and energy of their glory



"THE SURPRISE SPECTACLE THAT WELCOMED THEM WAS NEARLY OVERWHELMING"

days. They had been a double act since 1927, when they became a sensation by making over 30 silent films for Hal Roach Studios. And when the talkies came in, The Boys, as they became affectionately known, were among the most successful silent stars to find their voices (one English, one American), appearing in more than 40 two-reelers and their first feature-length films.

After the immense success and fame of the 1930s, things had grown tougher. A contractual dispute between Laurel and Hal Roach led to a move to different studios – 20th Century Fox and MGM –

where they lost creative freedom. At the same time, both men struggled financially: Laurel due to a long list of costly marital problems, while Hardy had a weakness for gambling, once losing £350,000 in a week betting on horses.

Their respective health worsened in the late 1940s, with careers risking a slide into the realms of the 'has-been'. Their final film, *Atoll K* (also titled *Utopia or Robinson Crusoe Land*) was panned by critics on its release in 1951, not least as Laurel had painful prostate complications throughout filming and Hardy suffered from issues with his weight, causing them both to look pale and sickly on screen. The French-Italian film had a tortuous production, exacerbated by a poor script and language barriers that meant those on set couldn't communicate properly. Laurel joined the critics in one letter, saying of the film, "As far as I'm concerned – it stinks!"

Still, after taking time off to recover, the pair embarked on a morale-boosting



The 1953 tour took the pair across Britain and Ireland. Here they scrutinise a script backstage at the Newcastle Empire

tour of the British variety stages in 1952, the response to which encouraged them to return less than a year later. Due to technicalities with work permits, they chose to arrive in Ireland to rehearse before making their way to Laurel's native England.

Ever the workaholic, he penned a new sketch for the tour, 'Birds of a Feather'.

Hardy appeared in films without Laurel, including *The Fighting Kentuckian* with John Wayne



THE BOYS GET TOGETHER

Before they were Stan and Ollie, they were Arthur Stanley Jefferson and Norvell Hardy. The former, from the English town of Ulverston, had toured the US from 1912-13 with the travelling troupe of Fred Karno - the PT Barnum of slapstick - as understudy to Charlie Chaplin. He then broke out on his own, changed his name to Laurel and started writing and directing, before joining Hal Roach Studios in 1925.

Hardy joined the following year, having spent his youth managing a movie theatre in his home state of Georgia. It was while projecting that he chose to give acting a go, so he moved to Florida to work at Lubin Studios. They both became Hal Roach All Stars in their own right, but then the bright idea came to put them together.

Stan Laurel (left) as a member of Fred Karno's performing troupe in 1910

The pair play whisky tasters - with the motto "The more we drink, the more we earn" - who get so drunk that Hardy insists he can fly with the birds, before falling out of a window into a river. Cue the buckets of water. He ends up in a mental ward and the usual chaos ensues when Laurel visits, allowing Hardy to end with his well-known catchphrase: "Well, here's another nice mess you've gotten me into!"

BEST MATES

What was abundantly clear to audiences was just how strong Laurel and Hardy's friendship remained in these later years. If anything, their ties had never been closer. They never seemed to argue throughout months of travelling and performing, and always supported each other. When Laurel had fallen ill in the 1940s, having discovered he had diabetes, he had urged a reluctant Hardy to go for his own roles in John Wayne's *The Fighting Kentuckian* from 1949, and 1950's *Riding High*, starring Bing Crosby.

As in their films, their contrasting styles combined beautifully (just watch

the dance in the 1937 feature *Way Out West* to see how in sync they could be), although their real-life personalities were the opposite to their screen personas. Laurel was the brains, the writer and director of much of their work, with a childhood background in the music halls. Meanwhile, Hardy had always been happy to leave Laurel to write while he went golfing. His strength was as a versatile character actor, developed as a youth appearing in around 250 films, often under his nickname 'Babe', before teaming up with Laurel. It was this dynamic that made them world-famous, and would hopefully bring people to theatres in droves.

And in 1953, there were still plenty of fans who relished the comforting familiarity of Laurel and Hardy's act as the brainless, accident-prone duo in their bowler hats. Even in public appearances or interviews, they were performing. People could enjoy both their real-life friendship and

LAUREL AND HARDY

Hardy the American moans about the weather of Laurel's native England on what would be their final tour

**“THE GRUELLING TIMETABLE
AFFECTED THE HEALTH OF
THE AGEING COMEDIANS
TIME AND TIME AGAIN”**



By 1953, both Laurel and Hardy had settled into loving, stable marriages. The history of their relationships, however, plays out like their on-screen catastrophes. Let's start with Hardy. Before finding happiness with Virginia Lucille Jones, a script girl on one of his films, he had been twice divorced. He married actress Madelyn Saloshin in 1913 and another actress Myrtle Reeves in

MASTERS OF COMEDY, NOVICES OF LOVE

1921. Both hounded him for the rest of his days, dragging him into fortune-sapping legal battles.

Believe it or not, Hardy had the smoother path to true love. In all, Laurel had one common-law marriage that ended with his 'wife' leaving the country, and four marriages to three women, before spending the rest of his life with Ida Kitaeva Raphael. He had a daughter with Lois Neilson, but the other marriages were short-lived, including

two to the same woman, Virginia Ruth Rogers. Then there was a dalliance with gold-digger Vera Ivanova Shuvalova, featuring a scene when Laurel dug a hole in his back garden, supposedly to bury her in.

Both men strove for contentment and stability in a relationship – odd, really, as that was exactly what they had with each other.

< the enduring roles everyone knew so well: the bulky American's fourth-wall breaking, tie-twiddling, mini-moustachioed pompous fool and the English simpleton running his hand through (what was left of) his unkempt hair and pulling a crying face.

"The pair so resembled their film selves that, when the curtain went up, the audience took a minute or two to realise they were seeing their childhood comedy favourites in the flesh," read the review of their Norwich show. From the tour's England debut in Northampton in October onwards, the duo had a busy schedule zooming across Britain. During Christmas 1953, they stayed in Nottingham for three weeks to perform a special show, delivering three performances a day and spending the rest of the time getting much-needed rest, sometimes in the nearby Bull Inn, run by Laurel's sister Olga.

But the joyous mood that Laurel and Hardy had felt when they arrived in Cobh didn't last, and the tour ended up being a disaster. The gruelling timetable and constant travelling affected the health of the ageing comedians time and time again. Early on, Laurel caught a cold so bad that it made him go deaf for a few days, resulting in the cancellations of shows in Finsbury Park in north London. And Hardy, who had always been known for his size, swelled to a high of around 24 stone. He lacked energy, found it difficult to be on his feet

for long, and sweated so much that he took several baths a day if possible.

In terms of ticket sales, which Laurel referred to in his letters as "Bus" for business, the tour was a disappointment, certainly when compared to their previous experiences. Bookings were rescinded and there were stories of ushers moving people to the front to make theatres appear busier. The man who had organised the tour, impresario Bernard Delfont, made the pair take cuts on their shares, much to their chagrin.

"The Bus was shocking in Sunderland," despaired Laurel. "Worst week of our tour – the audiences were blasé – so a miserable week was had by all."

If not for the fact that their wives accompanied them, the tour may not have continued as long as it did. After a heap of scandalous relationships and divorces, especially for Laurel, the two men had found



LAUREL AND HARDY



Steve Coogan as Laurel and John C Reilly as Hardy in the forthcoming film *Stan & Ollie*

"HARDY'S HEART ATTACK MEANT THE TOUR CAME TO AN ABRUPT END"

the women they would spend the rest of their lives with. Hardy had married Lucille, his third wife, in 1940 after meeting her on the set of *The Flying Deuces*. As for Laurel, his marriage to Ida in 1946 was his fifth. This figure doesn't factor in a common-law relationship, but does include marrying the same woman twice, either side of a short-lived liaison with a notorious gold digger. Lucille and Ida, while not getting on with each other, managed to keep their husbands going for a while.

PREMATURE ENDING

Hardy's health eventually gave up. While he had attempted to perform through pneumonia, he was forced to stop in May 1954 after suffering a mild heart attack. The tour came to an abrupt end when Laurel refused the offer of carrying on by himself and the final shows had to be cancelled. "We too were very much disappointed not being able to fulfil our engagement," he wrote to the manager of the Palace Theatre in Plymouth. "Unfortunate for all concerned, could have been a profitable and happy week." They sailed away from England having expressed hopes of returning soon – but this was not to be.

Laurel and Hardy would not work together again. Hardy lost a staggering seven stone following the heart attack, but his health continued to deteriorate

and he suffered a number of strokes, one so severe that he lost the ability to speak. He spent the rest of his days bedridden. On 7 August 1957, the American died at the age of 65. Laurel was heartbroken and promised never to perform again. "I miss him more than anyone will ever know and feel quite lost, but I will forever cherish the wonderful memories I have of him and the many happy times we shared together in the past," he wrote to a friend. When his own failing health prevented him from attending the funeral, he sadly accepted the situation: "Babe would understand".

Laurel spent his last years responding to every single piece of fan mail he received and offering guidance to young comedians who contacted him, including Peter Sellers, Jerry Lewis and Dick Van Dyke. After giving the world of comedy more than his 100-plus films with Hardy, 74-year-old Laurel passed away on 23 February 1965.

Among those at his funeral was silent-movie legend Buster Keaton, who paid the ultimate tribute. "Chaplin wasn't the funniest. I wasn't the funniest. This man was the funniest". ⓒ

GET HOOKED

FILM

The movie *Stan & Ollie*, starring Steve Coogan and John C Reilly, goes on general release in the UK in January

TOP 5 LAUREL AND HARDY FILMS

PUTTING PANTS ON PHILIP (1927)

The first official outing of the double act explores the dangers of someone as prone to chaos as Stan Laurel walking around in a kilt.



BIG BUSINESS (1929)

What begins with the pair trying to sell Christmas trees turns into a classic Stan and Ollie tit-for-tat, featuring a destroyed house and a flattened car.



THE MUSIC BOX (1932)

Laurel and Hardy's comedy reaches new heights, literally, as they try to deliver a piano up a ludicrously long flight of stairs.



SONS OF THE DESERT (1933)

One of their most beloved and influential films, it also gives its name to the Laurel and Hardy appreciation society, founded in 1965 with Stan's approval.



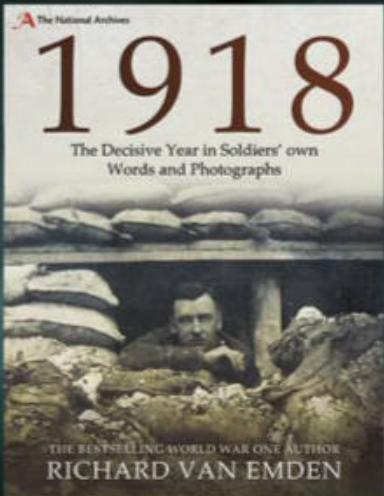
WAY OUT WEST (1937)

The beautifully and synchronised soft-shoe shuffle in the middle of an Old West town has to be one of the most charming moments in cinema.

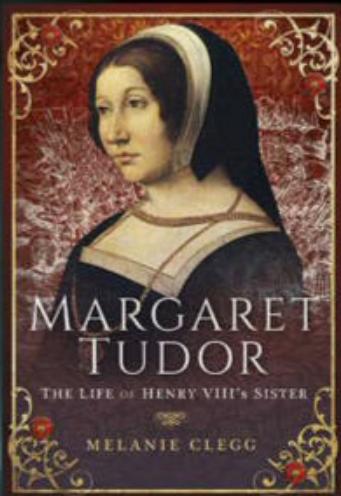


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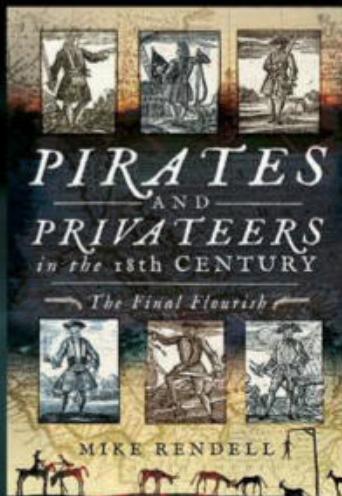
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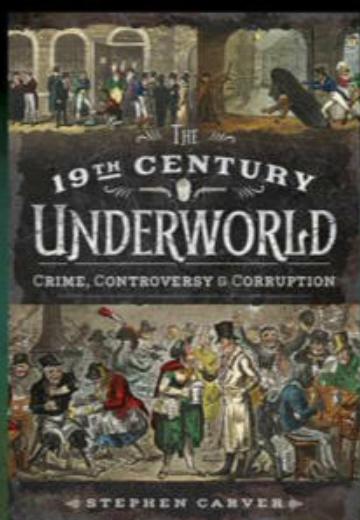
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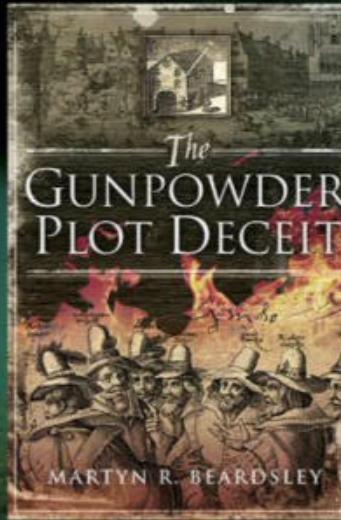
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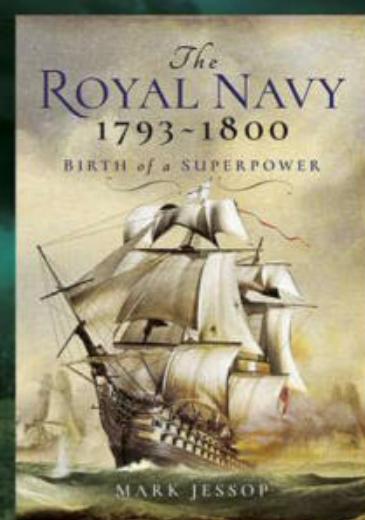
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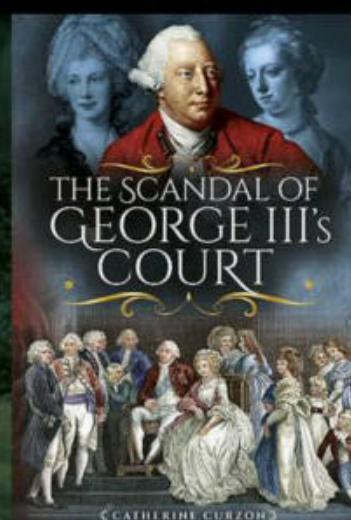
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Weird remedies

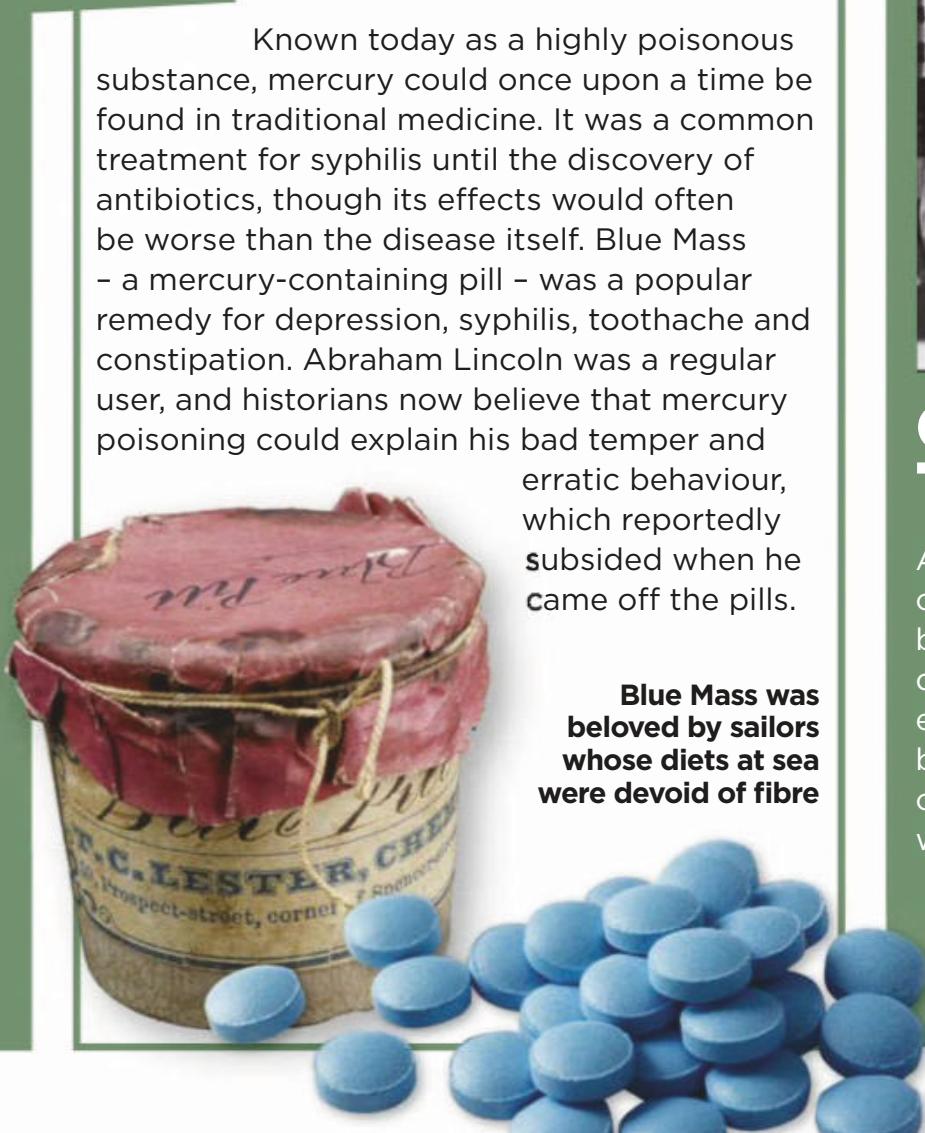
Unpalatable, outlandish and often fatal, these are medical cures of yesteryear you'd hope never to be prescribed



It wasn't all about blood – gladiator liver was also touted as an epilepsy cure

GLADIATOR BLOOD

Gladiator combat was one of the most popular forms of entertainment for the Ancient Romans, but there was another reason crowds would flock to watch these gruesome games. The blood of a freshly-slain gladiator was believed to cure epilepsy. The condition was discussed in many ancient texts with some believing the afflicted were possessed by evil spirits or cursed by the gods. Spectators would also partake in the vampiric tradition in order to gain the strength of the fallen warrior.



MERCURY

Known today as a highly poisonous substance, mercury could once upon a time be found in traditional medicine. It was a common treatment for syphilis until the discovery of antibiotics, though its effects would often be worse than the disease itself. Blue Mass – a mercury-containing pill – was a popular remedy for depression, syphilis, toothache and constipation. Abraham Lincoln was a regular user, and historians now believe that mercury poisoning could explain his bad temper and erratic behaviour, which reportedly subsided when he came off the pills.

Blue Mass was beloved by sailors whose diets at sea were devoid of fibre

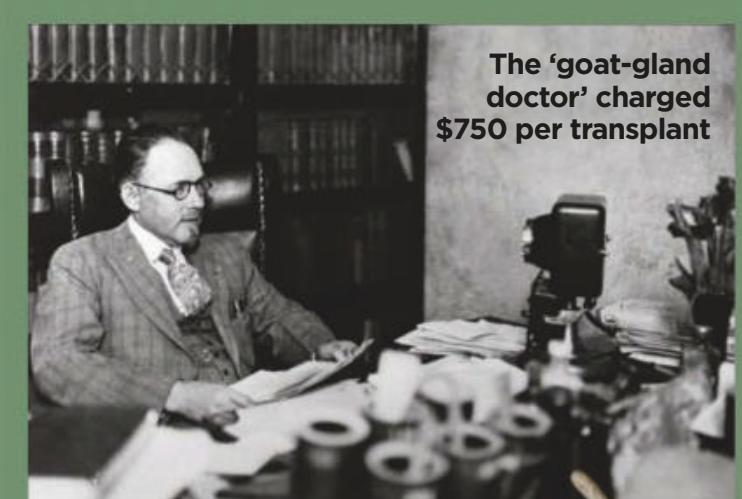


Medieval surgeons gave bloodletting a gentler name: 'breathing a vein'

Bloodletting was not only for the ill: some folk opted to be bled regularly as a preventative measure

BOTTLED WIND

Do two wrongs make a right? The Black Death ravaged Europe during the mid-14th century, killing an estimated 25 million people. Today, we know that the bubonic plague was a disease spread by rat-borne fleas, but at the time everything from the wrath of God to bad smells in the air was blamed. People were advised to counteract this with foul odours of their own. Trapping wind in a jar was thought to protect them from contracting the disease.



The 'goat-gland doctor' charged \$750 per transplant

GOAT TESTICLES

At the turn of the 20th century, John R Brinkley became a rich doctor with zero qualifications. With no medical experience and a degree he'd bought, he managed to become one of the wealthiest 'doctors' in America with his unorthodox practices of surgically transplanting goat testicles into patients as a cure for impotence. So many of them later died that he was eventually sued for malpractice.



BLOODLETTING

In modern medicine, blood transfusions are a common occurrence with people regularly donating blood for those in need. Until the 19th century, however, physicians believed that too much blood caused illness, rather than a lack of it. The Ancient Greek physician Hippocrates developed the idea of the four humours – four bodily fluids which must be balanced, of which blood was one. It was thought that certain illnesses were caused by an imbalance in the blood, and so bloodletting – either by being cut or using leeches – became a common procedure, used for everything from migraines to the plague. It wasn't uncommon for patients to die after having too much drained, with fainting seen as a positive sign.



ANIMAL DUNG

Not ones to waste anything, the Ancient Egyptians found an interesting use for animal dung. Many of the remedies found in the Ebers Papyrus – one of the oldest medical texts, dating back to 1550 BC – advocated the use of animal excrement for everything from cures to contraception. The 17th-century Dutch

physician Isbrand van Diemerbroeck suggested that nosebleeds could be prevented by filling your nose with hog or donkey dung. A sure way to increase your popularity!

Powder played an important role in the life of Digby's father, Everard: he was executed in 1606 for his part in the Gunpowder Plot

Digby was one of the founder members of the Royal Society



Pope Leo XIII was such a fan that he awarded Mariani a papal medal

SYMPATHETIC MEDICINE

Some natural philosophers of the 17th century believed that you could heal a wound by applying a remedy to the weapon that caused it – a practice known as sympathetic medicine. Its great proponent, Sir Kenelm Digby, created a powder to do just that, made of worms, pig brains, mummified corpses and rust.



CORPSE CRUMBS

It may seem illogical to use the dead to aid the living, but powdered corpse has been used in medicine for centuries. Mummies were crumbled into powders to cure everything from headaches to bleeding. Charles II was a fan of Goddard's Drops – later called the King's Drops – which contained human skull and were used for gout, swelling and heart failure. He reportedly took them on his deathbed – to no avail.

Mummy powder was much loved: it doubled as an aphrodisiac

MASHED MICE AND MORE

People of the past had a rather cruel way of making use of the other creatures that lived alongside them. During the Tudor period, wearing a donkey skin was believed to be a cure for rheumatism – as long as all the sore joints were covered – and the Ancient Egyptians would make a paste containing mashed-up mouse as a remedy for toothache. Moles' feet were worn as amulets in some parts of 17th and 18th-century England to relieve cramp.

Moles' feet are an old remedy – Pliny wrote about them in the first century BC



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What has been the most important medical advance in history?
Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

One was a lawyer, the
other a doctor. Leaving
those lives behind, Fidel
Castro and Che Guevara
became the foremost
figures of the revolution



THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

Sixty years ago, Fidel Castro's victorious revolutionaries arrived in Havana. **Nige Tassell** revisits an armed rebellion that brought communism within 90 miles of the Florida coast

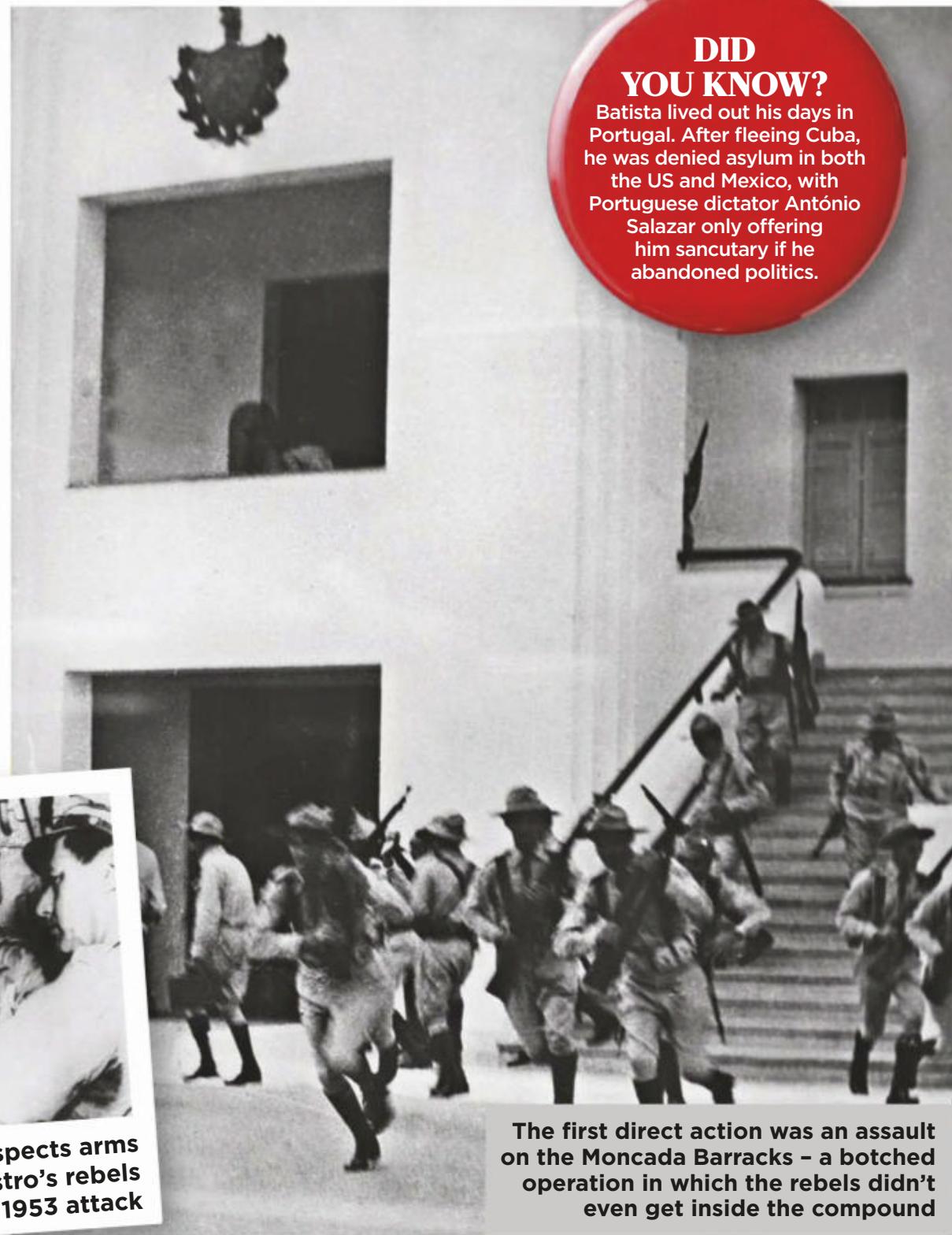
“**T**ime is a highly important factor in all things. The revolution cannot be completed in a single day, but you may be sure that we will carry the revolution through to the full. You may be sure that for the first time the Republic will be truly and entirely free, and the people will have their just recompense.”

As he made his speech from the balcony of the city hall in Santiago de Cuba on 3 January 1959, Fidel Castro ruminated on what had passed, and what was to come. In his battle fatigues – and almost certainly with a cigar close to hand – he was talking about the rebirth of a nation. His nation. Little more than 48 hours earlier, the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista had fled the Presidential Palace in Havana, never to be seen on the island again. His departure brought an end to the armed struggle that Castro and his rebels had been waging against Batista’s corrupt regime for more than half a decade.

As Castro spoke from the balcony, his comrade-in-arms – the Argentinian freedom fighter Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara – had already marched his forces into Havana. They had gone unchallenged. Castro himself would arrive in the Cuban capital five days later. And as he finally entered the city limits, the bearded revolutionary couldn’t possibly have foreseen the significant role his impoverished Caribbean island would soon play in global affairs.

TURBULENT TIMES

The events of the late 1950s in Cuba were but the latest chapter in a turbulent narrative. For most of the four centuries since Christopher Columbus had landed there in 1492 – excepting a short period under British rule – it had been part of the Spanish Empire. After a number of failed rebellions in the latter half of the 19th century, the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898 saw Cuba pass to United States control. A republic



ABOVE:
Fulgencio Batista addresses the Cuban Army after usurping power in 1952

TOP: Power struggles were not new to Cuba: these men are cheering the fall of President Gerardo Machado y Morales in 1933



Batista (left) inspects arms seized from Castro's rebels after the 26 July 1953 attack

DID YOU KNOW?
Batista lived out his days in Portugal. After fleeing Cuba, he was denied asylum in both the US and Mexico, with Portuguese dictator António Salazar only offering him sanctuary if he abandoned politics.

“Condemn me. It does not matter. History will absolve me”

CASTRO TO THE COURT AT HIS TRIAL, 1953

made an armed raid on the Moncada army barracks in Santiago de Cuba.

It was far from successful. Most of his forces were either killed in fighting or subsequently executed. Castro and his brother Raúl escaped, but were soon captured and imprisoned. The siblings were freed two years later, albeit only after local Jesuit priests had negotiated their release.

The Castro brothers retreated to Mexico, but not before Fidel announced to the press that he was leaving Cuba “because all doors of peaceful struggle have been closed to me”. It was in Mexico City that the brothers befriended Che Guevara. They shared plenty of common political ground. In fact,

Castro later described the Guevara he met in Mexico as “a more advanced revolutionary than I was”.

In late November 1956, Guevara, the Castros and 79 other armed rebels – now known as the 26th of July Movement – in a salute to the 1953 barracks raid – boarded the *Granma*, a decommissioned US Navy training boat that had been converted into a civilian yacht, and set sail for Cuba. After a longer-than-expected, ten-day crossing – beset by seasickness, hunger and a near-sinking – Batista’s troops were waiting for them on arrival. More than three-quarters of the rebels lost their lives in the fighting. The Castro brothers and Guevara survived, and they headed to the Sierra Maestra mountain range to regroup and draw up a new strategy.

THE MIDDLE GROUND

Revolution wasn’t necessarily the only tactic to remove, or at least lessen, Batista’s iron rule. As Julia E Sweig, author of *Inside The Cuban Revolution* notes, “between 1955 and 1956, the moderate political opposition and civic

was declared in 1902, though that would not be the last involvement the US would have in Cuba’s domestic affairs.

Four decades of disputed elections and coups ensued, culminating in the drawing up of a new constitution in 1940. Batista, who had fronted a military coup in 1933, served as the elected president for four years – and proved relatively progressive – but constitutional law prohibited him from standing for re-election. So, in 1952, he led another successful coup, promptly outlawing the constitution and cancelling that year’s elections. Aligning himself to Cuba’s wealthier quarters, he also welcomed American domination of Cuban industry, including sugar production. The weight of the US military was behind him too.

As a young lawyer, Fidel Castro had intended to stand for the Cuban People’s Party in the 1952 elections. Denied a democratic arena to undermine Batista’s regime, Castro elected to redraw the political landscape using alternative tactics. On 26 July 1953, he and a 160-strong brigade of like-minded rebels

groups formed the Society of Friends of the Republic and attempted to negotiate as a bloc, and directly with General Batista, a solution to Cuba's political crisis". These negotiations failed though, further polarising the country's political landscape. The middle ground was disappearing. For many, Sweig explains, this impasse "represented the nail in the coffin of a peaceful removal of Batista".

It wouldn't be unfair to suggest that Cuba in the late 1950s had descended into civil war. In March 1957, a student-led band of insurrectionists known as Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil attacked the Presidential Palace in Havana in an attempt to assassinate the dictator, but instead suffered significant loss of their own number. Elsewhere, trade unionists were intent on calling a general strike to bring the regime to its knees; Batista's response was to outlaw the right to assembly and to freedom of expression.

Unrest, in the form of bombings and arson attacks, continued into 1958, a year that would be one of the most pivotal in Cuba's comparatively short history as a republic. Batista suspended the forthcoming elections in March, the same month that the US Government halted the exporting of weapons and

armaments to Cuba. This embargo marked a distinct sea-change. Batista, previously dependent on US military support, now found his defences severely weakened with the removal of this supply line of arms. The Cuban air force, a key resource to call upon when trying to flush out revolutionaries from mountainous areas, particularly suffered, with spare parts no longer available.

The US had abdicated its support under the guise of not wishing to intervene in another nation's civil war. One supporter of the embargo, Representative Charles O Porter of Oregon, strongly welcomed the opportunity to disentangle the US from "the vicious police state ruled by Batista".

WORD ON THE STREET

As Batista's forces weakened, Castro's rebels were emboldened. They had the weight of the nation propelling them, support garnered through effective propaganda. Arguably the most successful propaganda tool, certainly to a population whose illiteracy levels had risen to 37.5 per cent during the Batista years, was through a pirate radio station known as Radio Rebelde. Via its short-

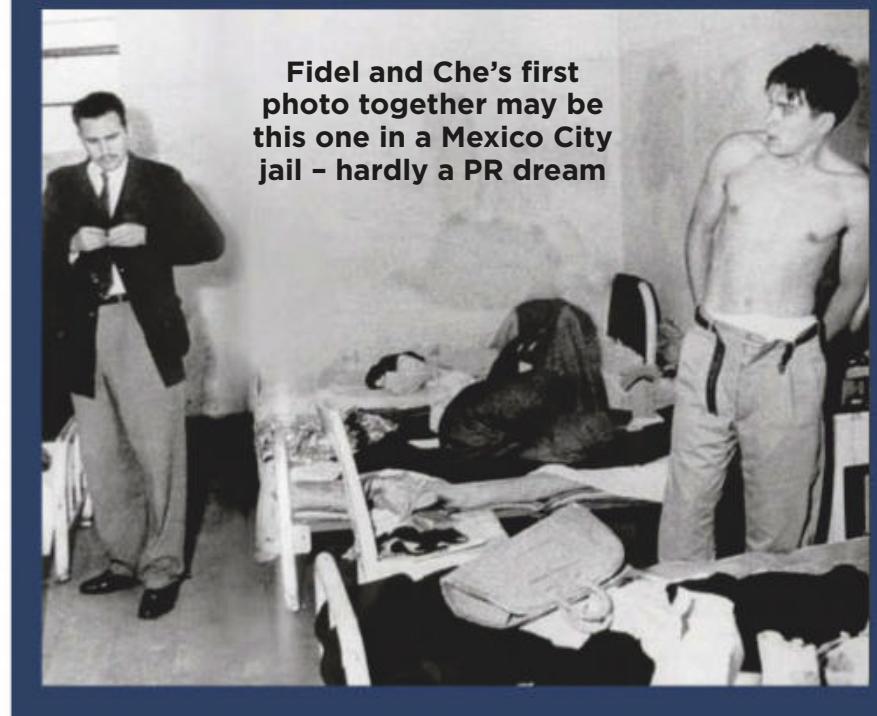
WHEN FIDEL MET CHE

After their release from prison in 1955, Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl travelled to Mexico. There they made the acquaintance of a young Argentinian doctor by the name of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara.

Fidel and Che's connection was instant. Despite their respectable occupations (Castro was a lawyer, Guevara a doctor), they shared a commitment to revolutionary ideals. At that first meeting, they talked for ten hours through the night. "I didn't need much to enlist for a revolution against a tyrant," Guevara later wrote. "I was particularly impressed with Fidel. I shared his optimism. We needed to act, to struggle, to materialise our beliefs. Stop whining and fight."

Guevara had travelled extensively around Latin America, seeing at first hand the poor economic conditions of the region, which he attributed to heavy US interference and exploitation. Cuba represented the perfect cause, where a US-backed dictator could be overthrown and an example made to the rest of the region. Over the subsequent weeks and months, the pair became a formidable partnership, meeting in the cafés of Mexico City to plot the path to revolution, fuelled by strong coffee and engulfed in cigar smoke.

Fidel and Che's first photo together may be this one in a Mexico City jail – hardly a PR dream



A beardless Castro is led to his trial for the Moncada raid. It was a farce, with Castro using the trial to attack Batista's regime



wave broadcasts, the rebels' message could penetrate enemy lines, allowing Cubans to not only keep abreast of the latest skirmishes, but also familiarise themselves with the aims and objectives of the 26th of July Movement.

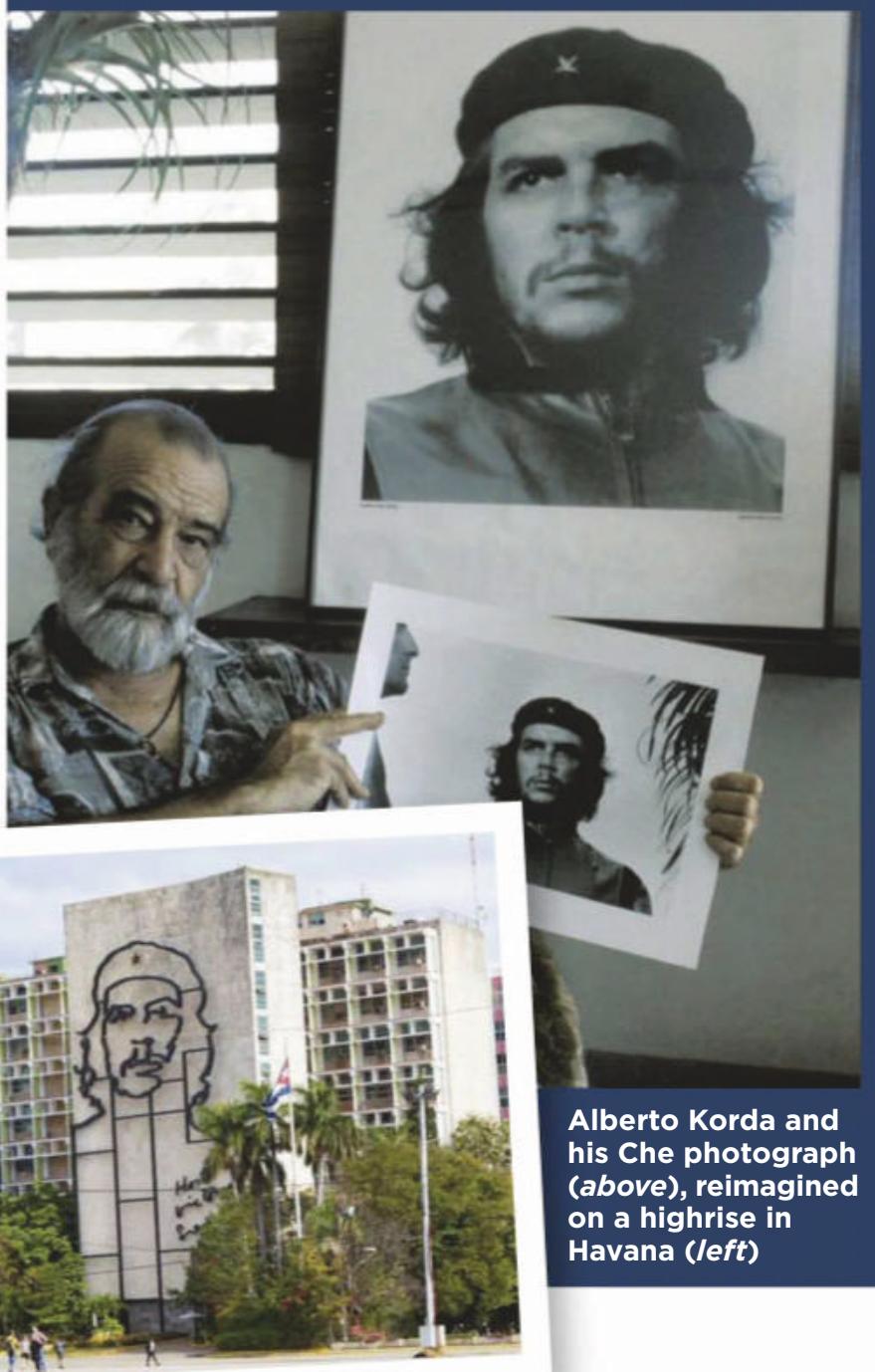
Radio Rebelde was ultimately overseen by Guevara, himself a strong spokesman for the revolutionary cause. His words – a keen balance of articulacy and everyman – not only spoke to civilians, but were also directed to Batista's troops. One particular announcement during the final year of the insurrection was aimed at a typical Batista soldier, "the junior partner of the dictator – the man who gets the last crumb left by a long

THAT ICONIC IMAGE

Che Guevara remains the most recognisable revolutionary in history, thanks to 'Guerrillero Heroico', a 1960 photograph taken by the Cuban photographer Alberto Korda. It made Guevara the poster boy for rebellion, albeit posthumously.

Used on a couple of occasions by the Cuban newspaper *Revolución* in 1960, for the following seven years, the photograph simply hung on the wall of Korda's studio, away from public view. In 1967, it was sourced for a forthcoming publication of Guevara's diaries of his time in Bolivia, as well as being used to accompany a feature on guerrilla fighters in the French news magazine *Paris Match*. After Guevara's capture and execution in Bolivia later that year, the image was used across the world and subsequently came to define, in the words of the writer Lawrence Osborne, "the revolutionary as rock star".

Artistic interpretations of the photograph furthered increased its visibility, reproduced on posters, T-shirts and badges. The Argentinian footballer Diego Maradona has the image of his compatriot tattooed onto his right bicep. Despite the image's ubiquity, though, Korda didn't seek a fee for any of its subsequent uses, saying, "I am not averse to its reproduction by those who wish it propagate his memory and the cause of social justice throughout the world".



ABOVE: Stripped of US arms, the Cuban Army proved little match for the insurgents

LEFT: Castro and his lieutenants waged their war from the depths of the jungle

"When this war is over, a much wider and bigger war will begin for me"

CASTRO, ON RELATIONS WITH THE US, 1958

line of profiteers that begins in Wall Street and ends with him".

Despite the arms embargo, Batista tried to turn the tide of insurrection by launching an offensive on Castro and his growing number of rebels in the Sierra Maestra during the summer of 1958. The offensive – known as Operation Verano – proved to be disastrous for Batista, thanks to an overwhelming defeat at the Battle of La Plata. As well as putting a self-inflicted dent in both the strength and morale of his soldiers, Batista had fortified the resolve of the revolutionaries. By this stage, Raúl Castro's forces already had control of the area around the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay.

March's postponed elections finally took place in November, but failed to strengthen Batista's hand. While his favoured successor, Andrés Rivero Agüero, was declared victorious, the results bore all the signs of massive electoral fraud and government interference. Batista didn't fool anyone; any support he still had among the general population largely dissolved in the aftermath of the election. He could still count on the loyalty of the Cuban army, but as the effects of the US arms

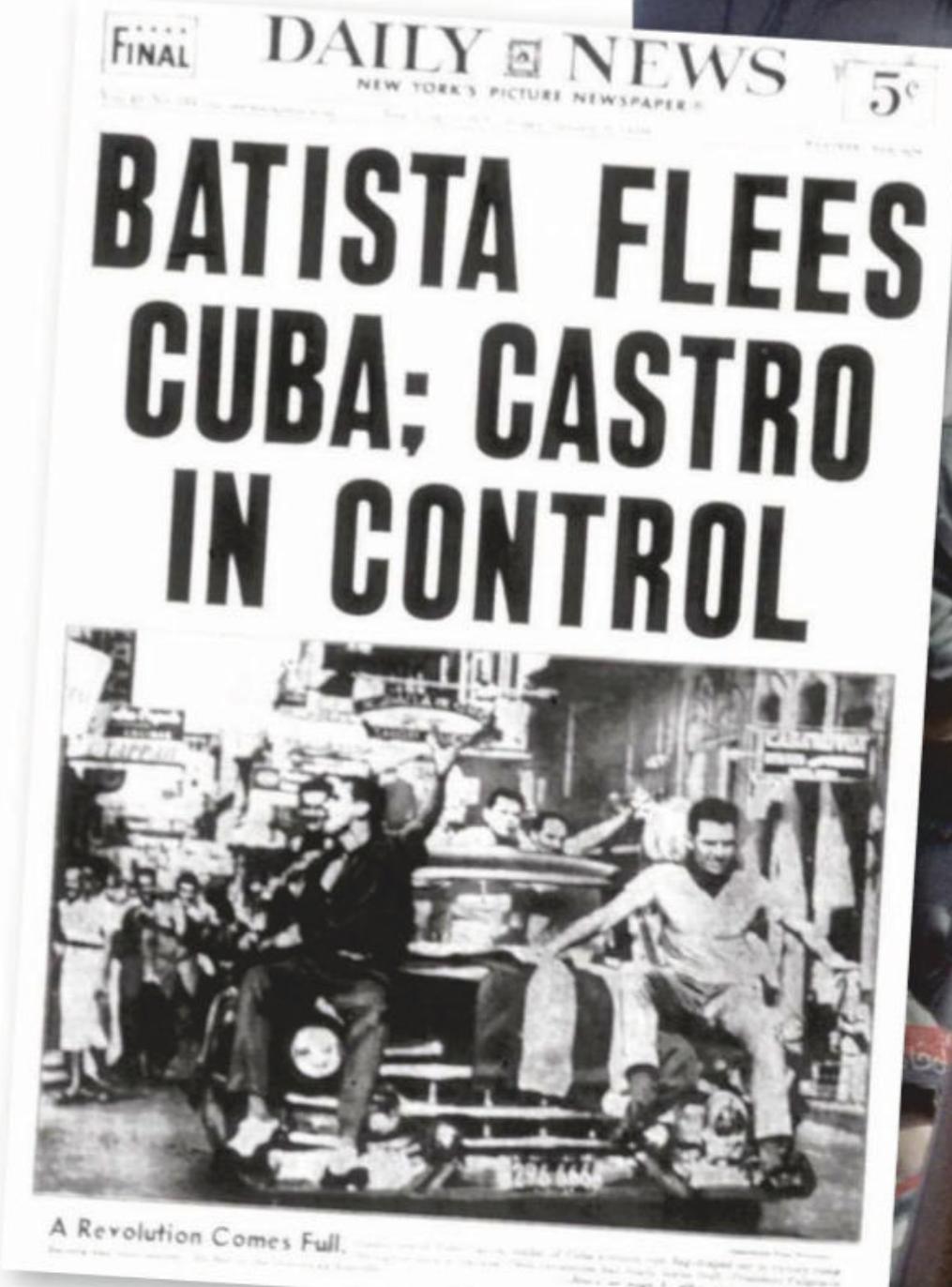
blockade really cut in, his soldiers were increasingly toothless. The rebels were now an irresistible force – and they went on the offensive themselves.

CRUCIAL SHOWDOWN

The 26th of July Movement's final offensive was four-pronged, a combination of rebel columns commanded by Castro, Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos and Jamie Vega. The forces led by Guevara and Cienfuegos reached the central regions by late December, where the Battle of Santa Clara – fought on the final days of 1958 – proved to be the definitive engagement. It was won with the assistance of rebels from the Dirección Revolucionario Estudiantil.

Santa Clara was a significant strategic capture. As the hub of the country's railway network, it bequeathed great power and influence over the rest of the island to whomever had control of the city. It was now in rebel hands. The writing wasn't just on the wall for Batista, the paint had dried hard. The game was up.

In the first few hours of 1959, the dictator fled Cuba for the Dominican Republic, leaving Guevara's forces to march on Havana uncontested. The speed



ABOVE: Batista's fall was met by jubilant scenes across Cuba

RIGHT: Castro addresses the populace of Santa Clara, around which the revolution's final skirmish was fought



DID YOU KNOW?

Castro's provisional government swiftly launched a series of state-sanctioned show trials of Batista officials that drew international disdain. "We are executing murderers and they deserve it," he told the world.

WOMEN AND THE REVOLUTION

The popular perception of the Cuban Revolution is that its protagonists were all scraggy-bearded, cigar-chewing men. Not so. While Castro and Guevara correctly remain identified as the main rebels, invaluable contributions were also made by female revolutionaries. They didn't simply undertake support work, such as making rebel uniforms and undertaking propaganda work. They were there on the frontline, firing M-1 machine guns in the heat of battle.

Celia Sánchez was the most conspicuous of the female revolutionaries. A key strategist ("Celia's ideas touched almost everything," explained the guerrilla-turned-politician Tete Puebla), Sánchez was the first woman into combat and in 1958 co-created the all-female Mariana Grajales platoon. "Women soldiers are as excellent as our best male soldiers," announced Castro. The Cuban leader later paid tribute to Sánchez in 1981, on the first anniversary of her death, saluting "someone who dedicated herself to duty, without resting for a moment, without forgetting one single detail".



Celia Sánchez (right of centre) became Cuba's most-wanted woman during the Batista era

LAS VEGAS IN THE CARIBBEAN

When former president Fulgencio Batista re-grabbed power in a military coup in 1952, there then began seven years of widespread corruption in Cuba. It also became something of a hedonists' playground, where gambling and prostitution were rife. These were the business concerns of US Mafia bosses, such as Meyer Lansky and 'Lucky' Luciano. Batista, the corrupt opportunist, benefitted financially from their presence on the island. In return, organised crime controlled brothels, casinos and racetracks with little or no censure. Cash-rich tourists came in their droves; one magazine declared Havana at this time to be "a mistress of pleasure".

The corruption wasn't the reserve of those in high office. Public officials at all strata of Cuban society could turn a blind eye in exchange for a back-hander. "Brothels flourished," wrote the American journalist David Detzer. "A major industry grew up around them. Government officials received bribes, policemen collected protection money."

If the free and easy presence of the Mafia annoyed those of an anti-imperialist worldview, the US's more formal economic interests in Cuba antagonised them even more. In the late 1950s, US corporations owned 80 per cent of Cuba's utilities, 90 per cent of its mines, and 40 per cent of its sugar plantations. It's small wonder that this state of affairs – coupled with Batista's wholesale disregard for domestic policies that bettered life for the average Cuban – would lead to one of the 20th century's totemic revolutions.

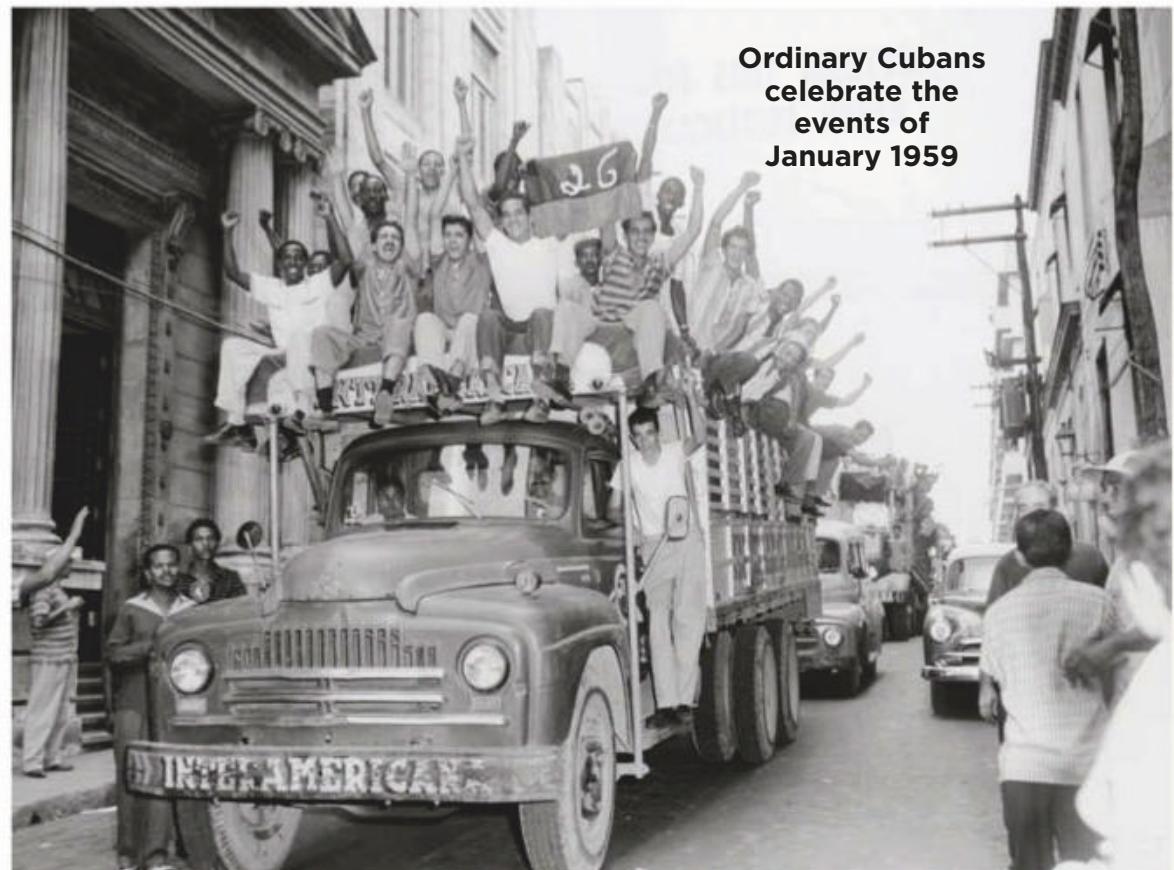


During the 1950s, Americans flocked south to Cuba for a hurricane of gambling, drink and much more

Victorious revolutionaries raise their weapons in Havana



Ordinary Cubans celebrate the events of January 1959



"The US initially recognised the legitimacy of the new government"

Cubans were unemployed, the same proportion who were out of work in the entire US. Half of the population didn't have electricity. And, most significantly for the new government's early political direction, 46 per cent of the country's land was in the hands of 1.5 per cent of landowners. To redistribute land more equitably, a programme of expropriation – seizures of land and property – was introduced.

The US had initially recognised the legitimacy of the new government. Indeed, in the immediate post-revolution months, Castro travelled to Washington to meet with Vice-President Richard Nixon.

However, the expropriation policy wasn't welcomed by the US, which retained sizeable capital interests in Cuba – nor was the introduction of increased taxation on the exporting of mining products, nickel in particular.

Further cause for US concern came from a trade pact drawn up between Cuba and the Soviet Union in February 1960, and a damning indictment of US involvement in Cuba, as delivered by Castro to the UN General Assembly seven months later. In a speech lasting for more than four hours, Castro railed against how the US had propped up the Batista regime, citing American control of public utilities, banking, oil refineries and sugar production. "Let no-one be mistaken. There was no independent republic; there was only a colony where orders were given by the Ambassador of the United States."

Castro refused to apologise for the nationalisation policies the new government had enacted. It was clear Cuba was moving out of the shadow of the US. "There will be no mea culpa," he announced to the UN. "We do not have to ask for anyone's pardon." By the end of 1960, trade between Cuba and the US

of his departure had been somewhat unexpected. On 2 January, Alistair Cooke, *The Guardian's* man in Havana, reported that "the inglorious end of Batista came so fast" that long-term predictions were transformed into "short-range facts".

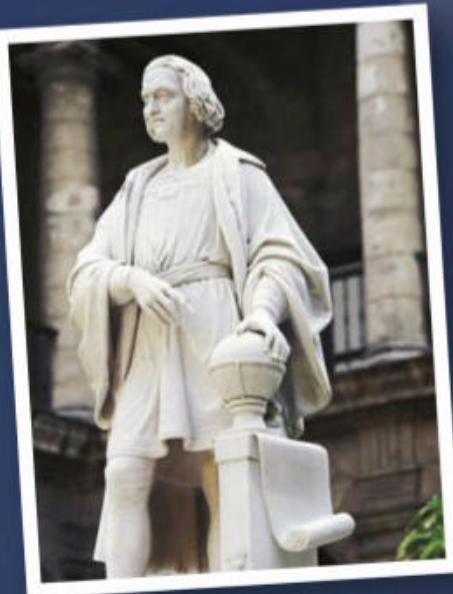
STATE OF THE NATION

When Fidel Castro arrived in Havana on 8 January and shortly took the role of prime minister. He was fully aware of the state of Cuban society that he and his rebels had inherited. Around 600,000

DID YOU KNOW?
Despite his anti-capitalist worldview and his condemnation of material wealth, Che Guevara was actually a fan and collector of that symbol of personal affluence – Rolex watches.

CUBA THROUGH THE AGES

The evolution of an island that's no stranger to change and upheaval



► Christopher Columbus lands on the island. Claiming the territory for Spain, he declares it "the most beautiful earth that human eyes had ever seen". Within two decades, the conquistador Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar lands on Cuba to establish it as a Spanish colony.



The Ten Years War, the first of several campaigns for Cuban independence, ends in a stalemate known as the 'Rewarding Truce'. However, it's an uneasy peace that fails to neutralise the distrust Cubans have for their Spanish masters.

► A long-term insurrection - led by Fidel Castro and Ernesto 'Che' Guevara - finally ejects Batista from power, with their forces marching on Havana to take control of the country. The Cuban Revolution places communists within 90 miles of the US mainland.



► The siting of Soviet missiles on Cuba leads to the tensest moment in the entire Cold War when President John F Kennedy faces off against Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev. A compromise is ultimately found to the Cuban Missile Crisis: the weapons are dismantled in return for the promise of no further US-led invasions of Cuba.

1492

1762

1878

1898

1902

1909

1933

1952

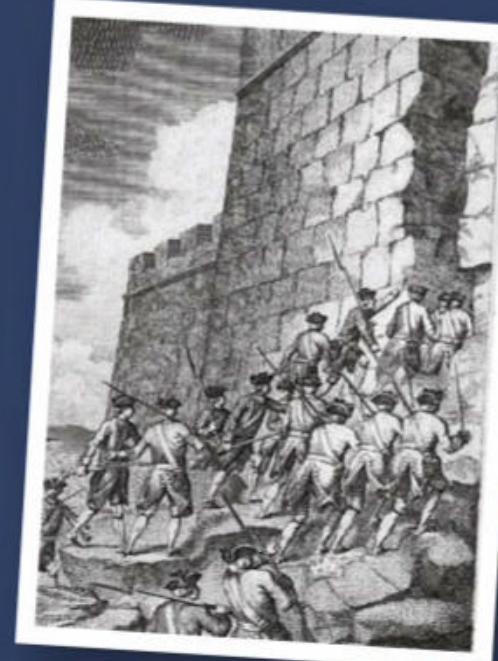
1959

1961

1962

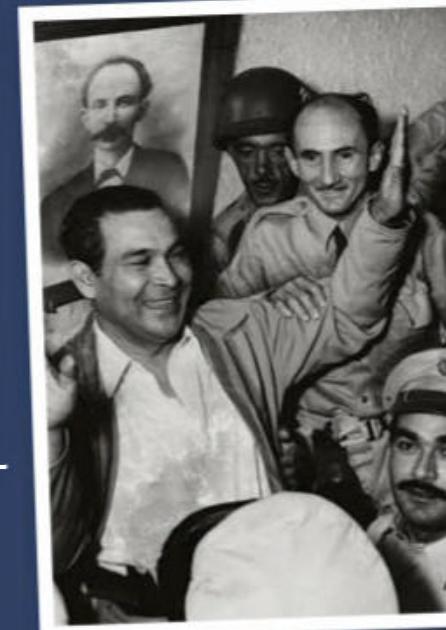
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► After two and a half centuries of Spanish rule (during which time the major industries of sugar and tobacco are established, facilitated by the extensive slave trade), Cuba is captured by Britain. British rule is short; the following year, the island returns to Spanish control in return for Florida.



US intervention in the three-year Cuban War of Independence leads to its declaration of war on Spain. The seven-month Spanish-American War ends with the ceding of Cuba into American hands.

With US troops having left Cuba the previous year, a succession of two-year governments is established, starting with the administration of José Miguel Gómez. Its continued reliance on US economic assistance leads some to still see Cuba as a colony in all but name. Indeed, the US doesn't formally recognise Cuban sovereignty until 1925.



► Having previously served as president between 1940-44, one of the crucial members of the earlier Sergeant's Revolt - Fulgencio Batista - seizes power in another military-aided coup. His administration is a corrupt, morally dubious one, with Batista openly welcoming US mafia dollars.

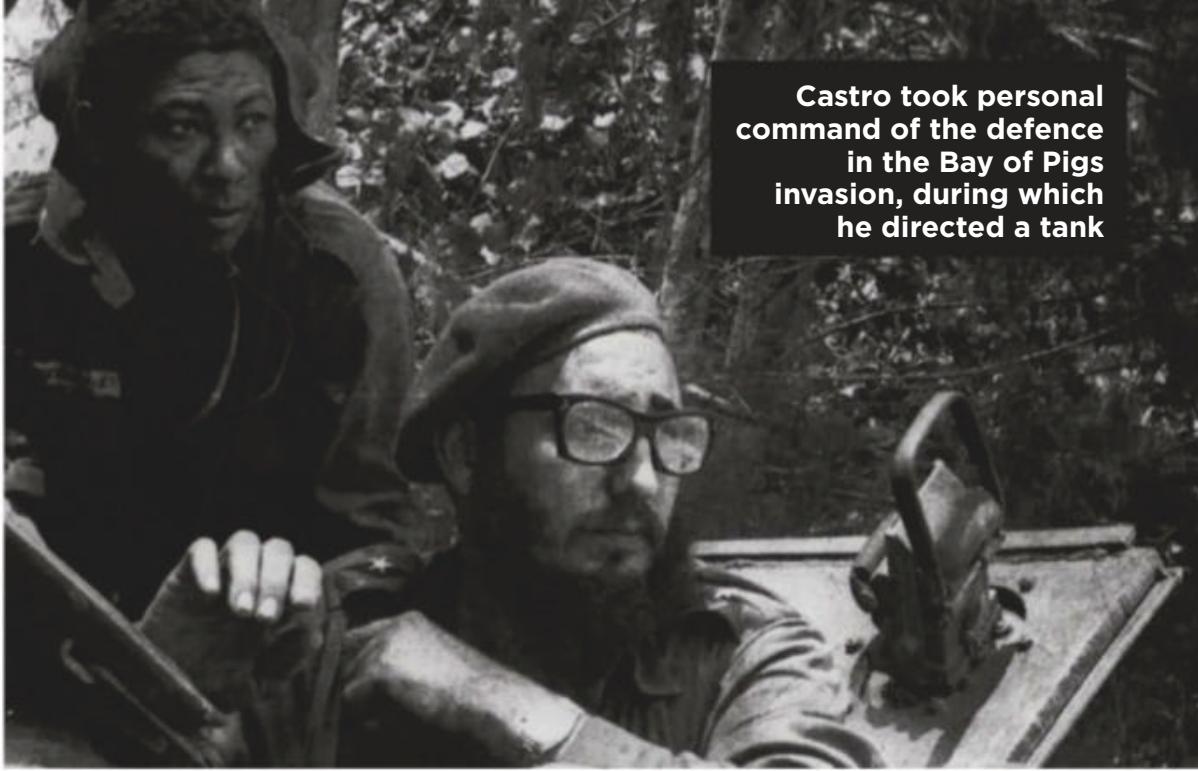
A CIA-commissioned band of anti-Castro Cuban exiles lands on the island at the Bay of Pigs with the intention of overthrowing the Communist government. Within three days, though, they are defeated by the Cuban Revolution Armed Forces.

► Having survived numerous assassination attempts during his time in power, Fidel Castro passes away at the age of 90. Ill health had already prompted him to hand over his presidential duties to his brother (and fellow revolutionary) Raúl.

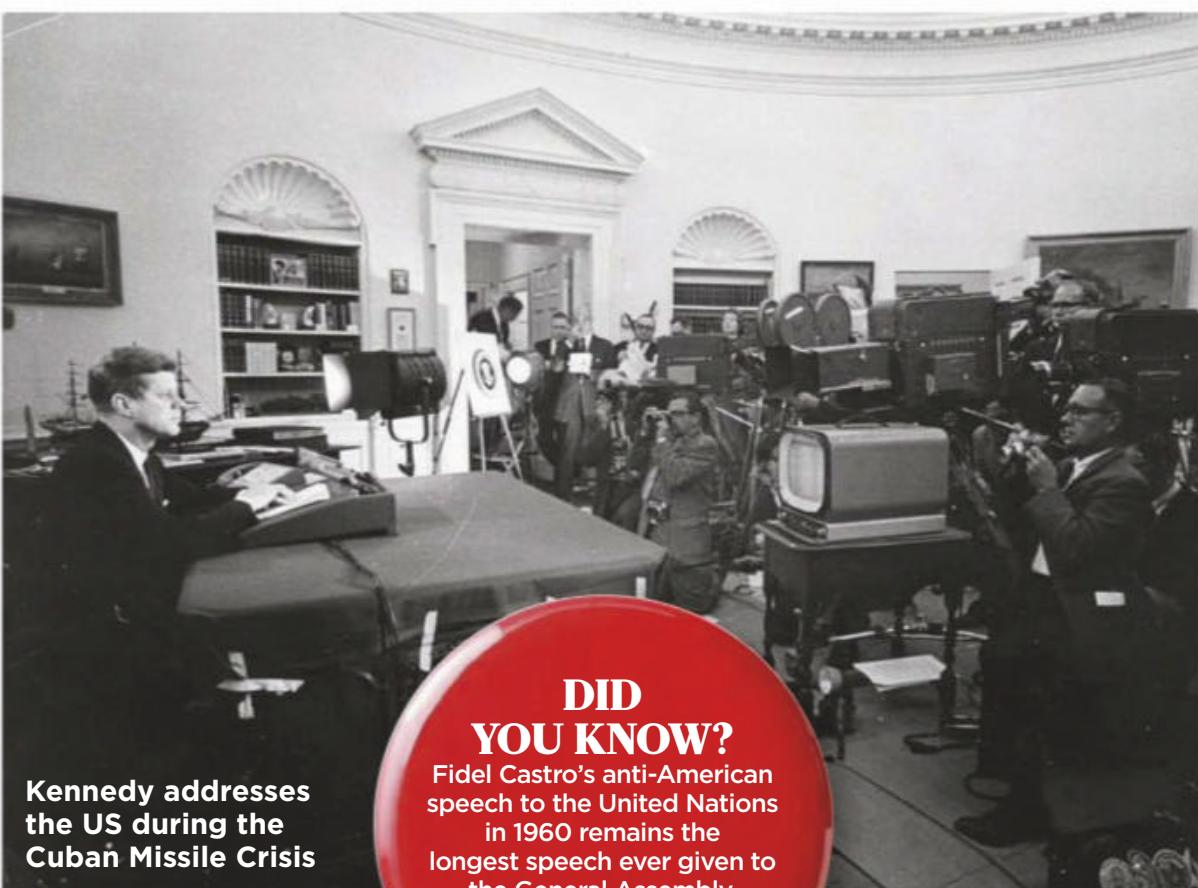




It took the best part of a week for Castro to march to Havana, in part because he was given a hero's welcome in every town he passed through



Castro took personal command of the defence in the Bay of Pigs invasion, during which he directed a tank



Kennedy addresses the US during the Cuban Missile Crisis

DID YOU KNOW?

Fidel Castro's anti-American speech to the United Nations in 1960 remains the longest speech ever given to the General Assembly, clocking in at four hours and 29 minutes.

was almost non-existent. On 3 January 1961, two years after the revolution and 17 days before John F Kennedy's inauguration, a livid President Dwight D Eisenhower severed diplomatic ties with the island.

NOISY NEIGHBOURS

For the six decades since, Cuba has continued to be largely defined by its relationship with the US, a relationship for the most part based on antagonism.

The CIA-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 was a disaster for the US, an embarrassing debacle that failed to meet its objective: the overthrow of Castro. The following year saw the Cuban Missile Crisis, when Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev went head-to-head over the presence of Russian ballistic missiles in Cuba. Kennedy negotiated the removal of the weapons, in return for assurances that the US wouldn't invade Cuba again.

For all his hardball tactics during the crisis, the following year Kennedy revealed empathy towards the question of Cuba. "I believe that we created,

built and manufactured the Castro movement out of whole cloth," he confessed in an interview less than a month before his assassination in November 1963. "It is as though Batista was the incarnation of a number of sins on the part of the United States. Now we shall have to pay for those sins. In the matter of the Batista regime, I am in agreement with the first Cuban revolutionaries."

Having successfully removed a corrupt tyrant from power, 60 years later the Cuban Revolution continues to be described as a work-in-progress. Indeed, it remains the one-party state that it was at the time of Batista and his cancelled elections. As Fidel Castro had conceded on that balcony in Santiago de Cuba back in early 1959, the revolution couldn't be completed in a single day. ☀

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Did Fidel Castro change Cuba for the better? Or did he end up being as bad as his predecessor?
Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

THE LEGACY OF A REVOLUTION

The immediate impact of the Cuban Revolution was that it placed this comparatively small island on the world stage. The arrival of a left-wing regime less than 100 miles from the US mainland put it right at the frozen heart of the Cold War, especially when the Soviet Union began courting Fidel Castro a short time into his presidency. Cuba became a perceived threat to US homeland security. The attempt to assassinate Castro during the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 – and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the gravest stand-off of the entire Cold War – put the island both at the top of the US foreign policy agenda and on the world's television screens.

While a series of trade embargoes issued by Washington have damaged Cuba's economic development (especially when the Soviet subsidies dried up after the dissolution of the USSR), domestically the revolution has had some major successes. Thanks to significant state investment in education, Cuba's literacy rate (of those 15 and older) stands at 99.7 per cent, one of the very highest in the world and far in excess of the global average of 86.3 per cent. Similarly, investment in healthcare means that infant mortality is one of the lowest in the world, and lower than in the US. Life expectancy for Cubans is also higher than it is for their neighbours to the north.

As recently as 2000, three-quarters of the Cuban workforce was employed by the state. Since then, however, several occupations that were previously nationalised – such as cab drivers and shopkeepers – are now free to operate in the private sector. Entrepreneurship is increasingly encouraged, and Cuba has become a major tourist destination. Where once was absolutism, revisionism can now be found. As the old revolutionary Raúl Castro, who succeeded his older brother as head of state in 2008, declares, "either we change course or we sink".



Education has remained a government priority since the revolution, with Cuba's illiteracy rate close to zero

Helped by London Bridge's narrow arches preventing icy water from flowing, the Thames' frost fairs offered a multitude of amusements



London's little Ice Age

Whenever the River Thames froze over, Londoners would take to the ice for the ultimate winter wonderland: the frost fair. Yet the carnival atmosphere was cold comfort to those who relied on the river to live, writes **Sandra Lawrence**





Flush-faced revellers drinking, dancing, flirting and gorging around glowing braziers on a frozen River Thames. We can almost smell the ox being roasted, the apples being toasted, the ale being hoisted in this merry vision of Olde London Towne. And, perhaps incredibly for such a romantic notion, it's largely true. Between 1309 and 1814, the Thames froze on 23 occasions, five of which saw ice thick enough to bear a full-on, traditional frost fair.

By the 1600s, everyone knew the drill. Watermen, deprived of their usual river-cabbie trade, would declare the ice safe, hawkers would hastily erect booths, stalls, stages and rinks, and Londoners, rich and poor alike, would flood onto the river for a few days of feasting, debauchery and madness.

SHADY CHARACTERS

Of course, all this jollity is not the full picture. Equally delighted at the sudden bacchanalia, pickpockets, con men, prostitutes, bookies and other snappers-up of unconsidered trifles enjoyed rich pickings from folk snow-blind with frost-fever – and, quite possibly, seriously strong liquor. All transport on the Thames, including barges bringing food and fuel, ground to a halt, and only a few that depended on the river for their livelihoods could make decent money from the fair. Londoners, especially the poor, froze to death, starved to death and fell to their deaths through ice that wasn't as thick as they'd been assured. When the melt finally came,

barges were smashed while wooden bridges and dwellings collapsed in the floods. It might take months or even years for crops and wildlife to recover. In the summer of 1608, it was said you could walk for miles without hearing a blackbird's trill.

The 'Little Ice Age' has no definitive timescale. Some experts date it as early as the 13th century, but convention puts the worst of the planet's mini cool-down between the 16th and 19th centuries. Plunging average temperatures hit the whole of northern Europe and, as early as 1092, a widespread frost froze many an English river.

Before the advent of decent roads, the Thames was London's most important highway. The river was wide, relatively shallow and slow-moving, save for one section around London Bridge. Under normal conditions, the crossing's narrow arches created a mill-race effect, as ebbing tides rushed through. In extreme cold, though, blocks of ice surging downstream snagged between the pillars, effectively damming everything to their west. In 1309, the ice was solid enough for games. By 1363, people were beginning to find entertainment in the inconvenience; when a barge full of sea-coal was unable to travel

any further upstream than Maidenhead, a great feast on the river was declared. Fires were lit and revellers served by monks from the local Greyfriars monastery. In 1564, Queen Elizabeth ventured on the ice to shoot at 'prickes' (targets).

The first full-blown frost fair took place between 10 and 15 January 1608. Booths appeared overnight, selling fruit, beer, food and wine, and all manner of trades were plied. It was later claimed that the thrill of being shaved by a barber on the ice was something to be remembered in the afterlife. People danced, bowled, skated – and enjoyed other, more carnal pleasures. One John Chamberlain wrote that while "certain youths burnt a gallon of wine upon the ice", he was more intrigued by "an honest woman (they say) that had

a great longing to have her husband get her with child upon the Thames".

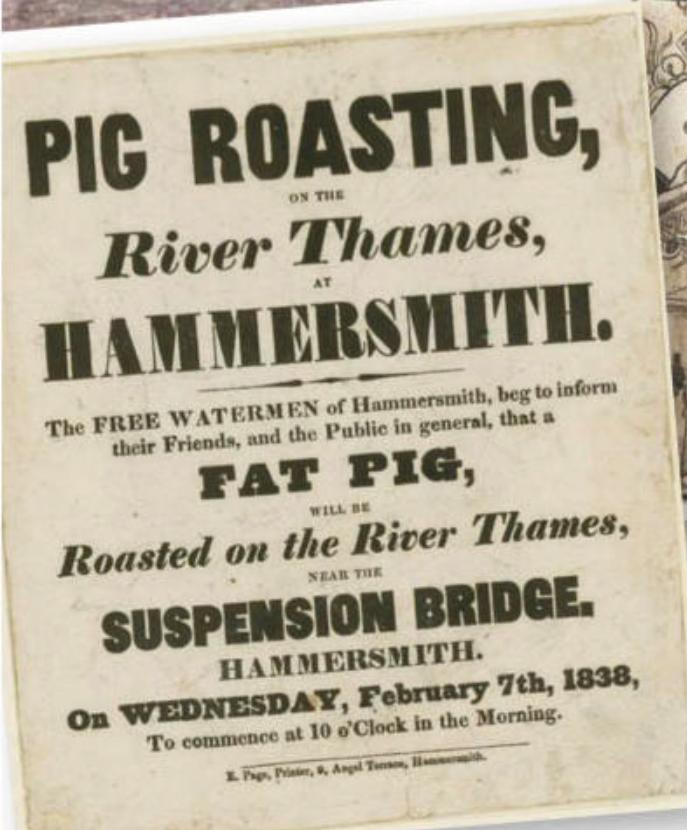
For most, however, the fun was largely innocent in nature. An enthusiastic amateur poet named William Baker described, in 1635, how youths were playing snowballs, noting "some build terrible monsters in the streets ... over here a cruel lion opens his jaws wide, while over there stands a wild bear, a pair of golden apples on its face for his two eyes and sporting a

**"Londoners
danced,
bowled,
skated – and
enjoyed other,
more carnal
pleasures"**



Souvenirs

Well-heeled and well-refreshed, revellers pounced upon hastily fashioned knick-knacks engraved with the date and occasion. Several mementoes survive from the freeze of 1683/84, including a frosted-glass and silver mug on display at London's V&A Museum, and a tankard, ballad sheets and souvenir print-outs, held by the Museum of London. Perhaps the most bizarre surviving souvenir is from 1814: a slice of gingerbread, saved for later but never eaten.



On-site printers were in high demand, whether producing posters or personalised souvenirs of the event



Rather extraordinarily, this piece of gingerbread – bought at a frost fair in 1814 – remains intact over 200 years later

collar of black coal, it fills the small boys with terror".

The winter of 1683/84 was one of the coldest England has known. Courtiers were found frozen to death, their horses having suffered the same fate. Trees split apart, and the Thames was frozen for ten weeks. Diarist John Evelyn watched the river "planted with [booths] in formal streetes as in a city ... all sorts of trades and shops furnished and full of commodities even to a printing presse". The 17th-century equivalent of the selfie, these presses printed, for sixpence, small souvenir sheets with partygoers' names, the date and the occasion. Carnival-goers might also purchase a newly-composed ballad describing the scene.

Jugglers, stilt-walkers, sword-swallowers, musicians, actors and acrobats jostled alongside bull-baiting, nine-pins, football, fox-hunting and, for the very easily amused, mere 'slideing'. Perhaps the most terrifying ride was the Dutch Whimsie, or whirling sledge, a boat tied to a pole and spun round on the ice at dizzying speeds by burly Netherlanders.

GRAVE INCIDENT

Every frost saw its casualties. A souvenir printout for a Mrs Mary Malkinton during the seven-week freeze of 1715/16 describes a certain Cripple Atkins roasting an ox, one 'Huffing Jack'; Will Ellis the poet and his wife Bess "rhyming on the hard frost"; a shoulder of mutton roasted at

>

Feasting and fun

While the rest of London struggled to get supplies, all was plentiful on the frozen Thames. Women toted baskets of hot apples, covered with cloths to retain their heat, while stalls peddled brandy balls, gingerbread, black pudding, plum cake, hot pudding pies, pancakes and snuff. An abstemious few might enjoy tea, coffee and hot chocolate, but the vast majority had no intention of staying sober. Beer, ale, brandy, 'mum' (hot ale with spices), 'purl' (a mix of gin and wormwood, similar to vermouth) and knock-you-down Geneva (Dutch gin) were all on sale in the 'fuddling tents', a term describing the state that drinkers would be in by the time they emerged.



Londoners needed no excuses to take on liquid refreshment, ensuring that frost fairs were often rowdy, bawdy affairs

FROST FAIRS



the sign of the Rat in a Cage; a Geneva (Dutch gin) booth; and, of course, the rowling (rolling) press. But it fails to mention poor Doll the Pippin Woman, an apple seller who fell to her death through less-than-perfect ice.

The 18th century's coldest winter – 1739/40 – saw the poor, especially, falling like flies. Hordes of people who normally relied on the liquid Thames paraded through the city streets demanding relief, knowing that even when the thaw came, their boats would be destroyed, either by melting ice or damage done by revellers using them as temporary stages. Some enterprising locals looked to the future, however, harvesting chunks of ice to store against a distant summer of cool drinks and frozen desserts.

FREEZING FOG

The attractions grew with the passing years. Fairground rides – including flying-boats, bear-baiting, puppet shows and music – inspired art itself. It's thought that the 'Frost Scene' in John Dryden/Henry Purcell's opera *King Arthur* was based on personal experience.

On 27 December 1813, in a city already used to 'London particulars', a blinding, freezing fog descended, described as "darkness that may be felt". Travel was impossible; several men of the West Middlesex Militia, marching to fight abroad, froze to death by a roadside.

By the first day of the following February, however, fog gave way to ice and Londoners embarked on another unregulated, five-day knees-up. Within hours, the usual stalls, booths and gambling dens were fashioned from sails, supported by oars, and decorated with brightly coloured bunting. Enterprising watermen charged a toll of 2-3d to get onto the Thames, newly named 'City Road'. Books, toys, knick-knacks and sweetmeats flew from the stalls, topped only by sales of gin, beer and 'Lapland Mutton' – the latter being a regular sheep, roasted and sold at a shilling a slice.

Celebrations, including dancing to fiddlers, continued by the light of the moon. A pub selling 'Wellington For Ever: Good Ale' celebrated the soon-to-be Duke, while an elephant was seen walking by Blackfriars Bridge. No fewer than ten printing presses plied their trade, including one owned by an enterprising chap called George Davis who printed the front page of his forthcoming

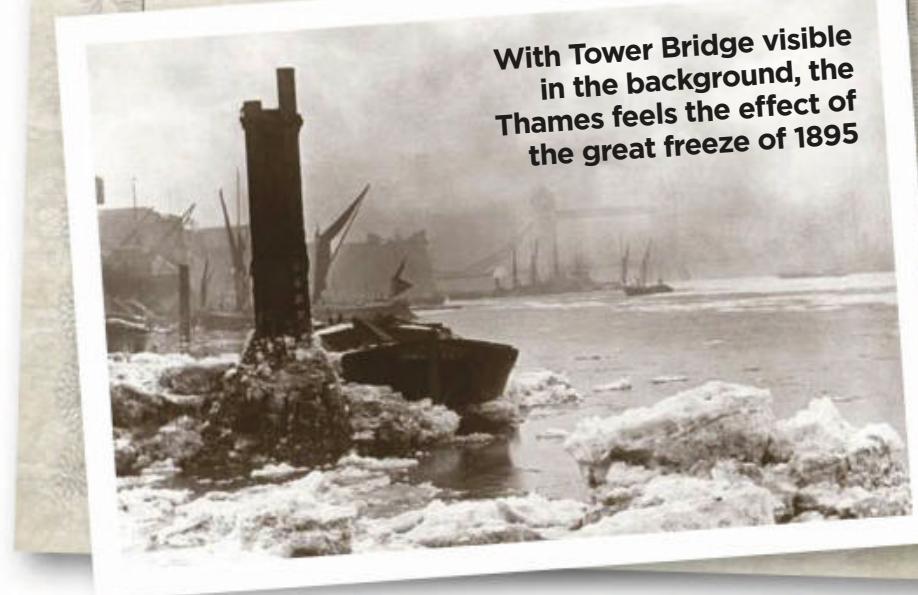
bestseller *Frostiana; or a History of the River Thames in a Frozen State* as a publicity stunt.

Severe winters continued through the 19th and into the 20th centuries. In 1838, a fire at the Royal Exchange proved devastating because fire hoses and engines had to be thawed out before they could tackle it. The freezing temperatures continued to reap a grim harvest of poverty-struck Londoners – in 1895, hordes of starving people literally fought to gain entry to a makeshift soup kitchen – but despite the odd game of skittles or hog roast, never again

Why we no longer have frost fairs?

John Rennie's new London Bridge, opened in 1831, boasted fewer and wider arches, keeping the Thames flowing, even in winter, while various man-made embankments contained the river, making it narrower and deeper. These factors – along with blocked tributaries, factory discharge and a generally warmer microclimate compounded by 20th-century glass and concrete – have all conspired to make the chances of a genuine London frost fair any time soon very slim indeed.

With Tower Bridge visible in the background, the Thames feels the effect of the great freeze of 1895



was there enough ice on the Thames to equal the Last Frost Fair.

The 20th century's harsh winters were greeted with resignation rather than elation. In January 1940, the coldest month for 45 years, folk bravely promenaded on the frozen Thames at Windsor, but the crack of splitting trees sounded, to them, like the explosion of enemy bombs.

The last really great freeze was during the winter of 1963, the coldest since 1740. Workers from the Casino Hotel, situated on Tagg's Island near Hampton Court, rode bicycles up and down the river, while hardy chaps drank pints 'relaxing' in deckchairs at Shepperton. But frost fairs as such had

become a thing of the past, a relic of frozen winters long gone.

The Museum of London holds a comic souvenir sheet printed by one of those famous presses on 5 February 1814. In it, a certain 'J. Frost', having "by force and violence taken possession of the River Thames" is given notice to quit immediately by one 'A. Thaw'. Jack Frost took note. To the ominous sound of ice cracking and liquid rain, the Thames was released that day, never to fully freeze again. ☀

A royal inconvenience

The Prince Regent's carriage having to turn back due to penetrating fog in 1813 was nothing to the indignities of an earlier monarch. During the freeze of 1648/9, a boat containing the body of the recently decapitated Charles I became stuck in the ice at Chertsey on its way to Windsor. The king had to be poled out by fishermen.

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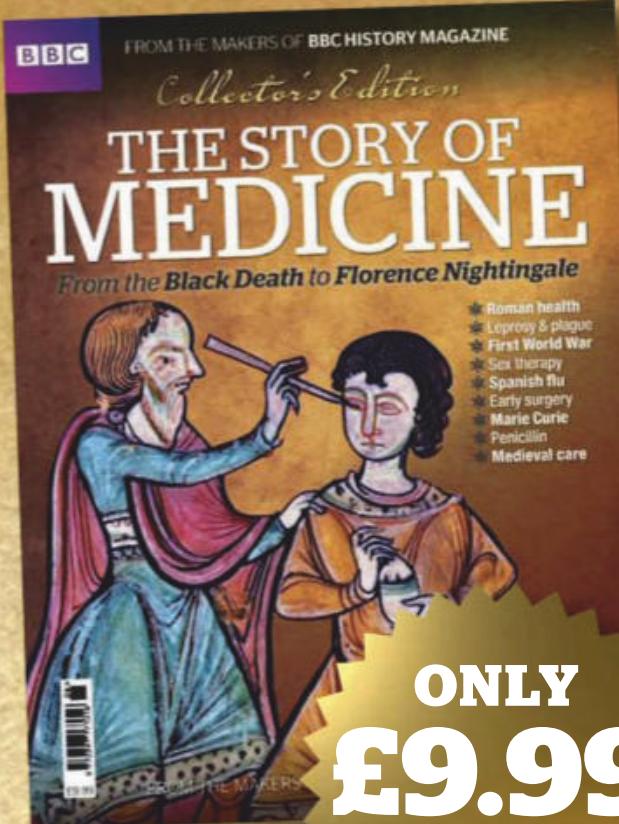
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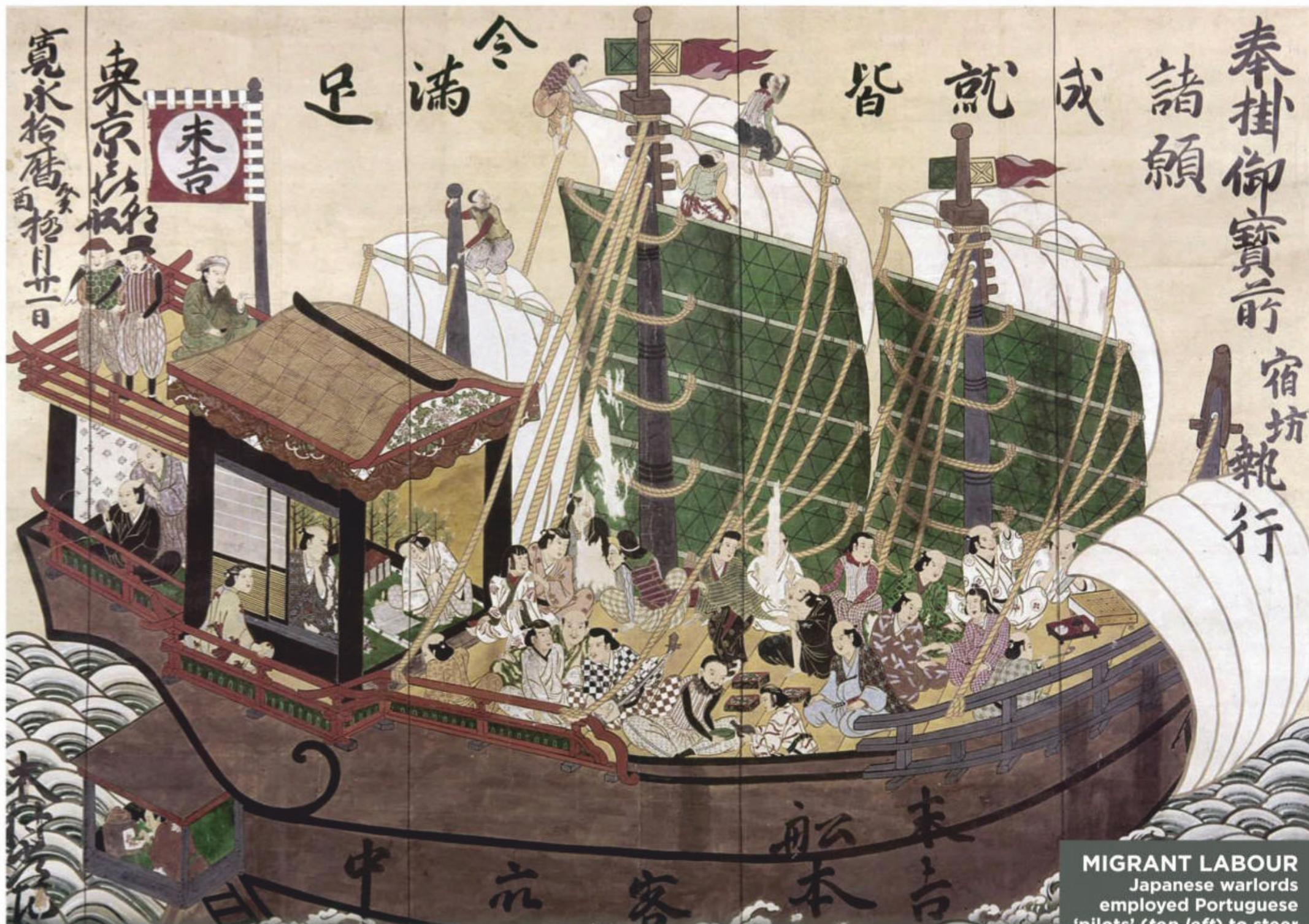
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Q&A

YOU ASK, WE ANSWER



MIGRANT LABOUR
Japanese warlords employed Portuguese 'pilots' (top left) to steer their own trading vessels

WHO WERE THE FIRST EUROPEANS IN JAPAN?



When a Chinese ship arrived at Tanegashima in 1543, the Portuguese travellers Francisco Zeimoto, Antonio da Mota and possibly Fernao Mendes Pinto were aboard, making them the first recorded Europeans in Japan.

Soon, the Portuguese began trading (which included firearms and slaves),

built a port and introduced Christianity. Other nations got in on the act until the 1630s, when Japan, to end the spread of heretical beliefs, closed itself from the world. This isolationism lasted for 220 years. The only Europeans permitted to remain were the Dutch, but only at a human-made island trading post off Nagasaki, called Deshima.

ALAMY



GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

Japan's isolation only ended in 1853, when US Navy commodore Matthew Perry sailed four warships into the bay of Edo and demanded - with a show of firepower - that trade be opened.



How old is the Scottish flag?

 While details are sketchy as to when the St Andrew's cross went from beloved national emblem to official flag, it seems to have had its first unfurling in the 16th century – in 1512, perhaps.

Yet the (admittedly legendary) origins of Scotland's use of the saltire go back a wee bit further. In AD 60, the apostle and future saint Andrew asked to be crucified on a diagonal cross as he considered himself unworthy to die in the same way as Jesus Christ.

Scotland adopted Andrew, and the saltire, in the centuries that followed, perhaps after his bones appeared in Fife, and churches

NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND XI

SALT WITH THE WOUND

This saltire was flown at the Battle of Culloden – the climactic clash of the Jacobite Rising of 1745

sprang up in his name. At some point, he became patron saint – in AD 832, if one tale is to be believed. The night before the Pictish King Angus II fought the English forces of Athelstan, he had a vision of St Andrew promising he would triumph. The next morning, his army saw a huge white saltire made of clouds appear against the blue sky.

A memorial at Athelstaneford in East Lothian, the site of battle, still commemorates the Scottish victory.



SPRAY AND PRAY
There was no point aiming – neither the blunderbuss nor the dragon were precision firearms



Historical record doesn't target a single inventor. The blunderbuss, an early shotgun, spread around the world, much like the lead balls from its flared muzzle.

Its name, however, points to the Dutch, as it comes from 'donderbus', or thunder tube. And, although not all that effective, it certainly made a racket as it sprayed shot at close range. Though it was around earlier, the blunderbuss

WHAT WAS ON CHAMBERLAIN'S PIECE OF PAPER?



It is an iconic moment in history: Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain stepping from a small plane, back from talks with Hitler in Munich, and waving a piece of paper as crowds cheer. "Peace for our time," he would proclaim, believing he had resolved the crisis in Czechoslovakia.

The paper was not, however, the actual Munich Agreement – the latest act of appeasement to Nazi aggression – but a statement agreed in a private meeting and signed by Chamberlain and the Führer. The three paragraphs stressed the importance of Anglo-German relations, the need for "consultation" and the shared desire "of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again".

Less than a year later, with Chamberlain's declaration of World War II, the words on that paper were rendered useless.



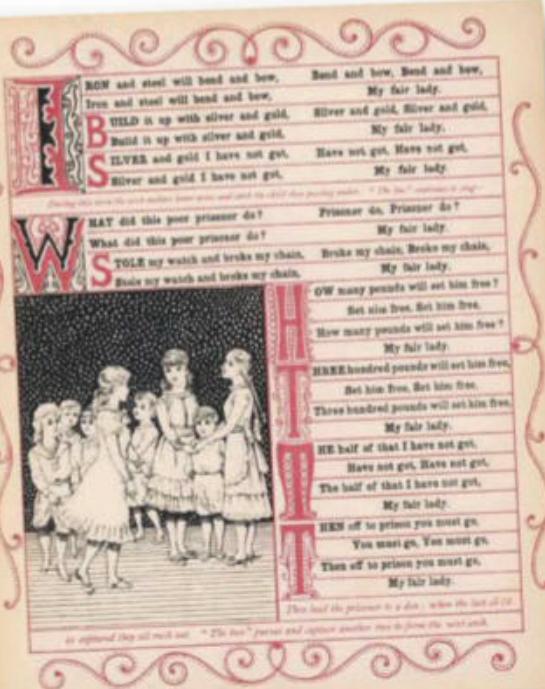
LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER

Chamberlain chirped "I've got it!" after gaining Hitler's worthless signature

Who invented the blunderbuss?

peaked in the 18th century. The wide opening made reloading easier, appealing to cavalry, carriage drivers and ship-boarding parties. That's why we now so readily associate the blunderbuss with pirates.

There was a handgun-sized version too, the dragon, which became such a favourite among mounted infantry that they became known as dragoons.



A DARK TURN
Children 'trapped'
while playing the
London Bridge game
end up in 'gaol'

When was London Bridge falling down?

(target) There are several theories about the nursery rhyme *London Bridge is Falling Down* – an odd subject for a jolly jingle sung by children – and none are exactly child-friendly.

Suggestions about its meaning include a Viking attack or the burying of children, alive, in the bridge's foundations as a sacrifice for its stability. Both are unlikely. Evidence for the Viking destruction is inconclusive

and no skeletons have been discovered. More likely, the song refers to the six centuries of repairs on Old London Bridge, including after two fires in the space of 33 years – 1633 and during the Great Fire. And don't ask about 'my fair lady', as her identity is unknown too.

WHAT WERE DAZZLE SHIPS?

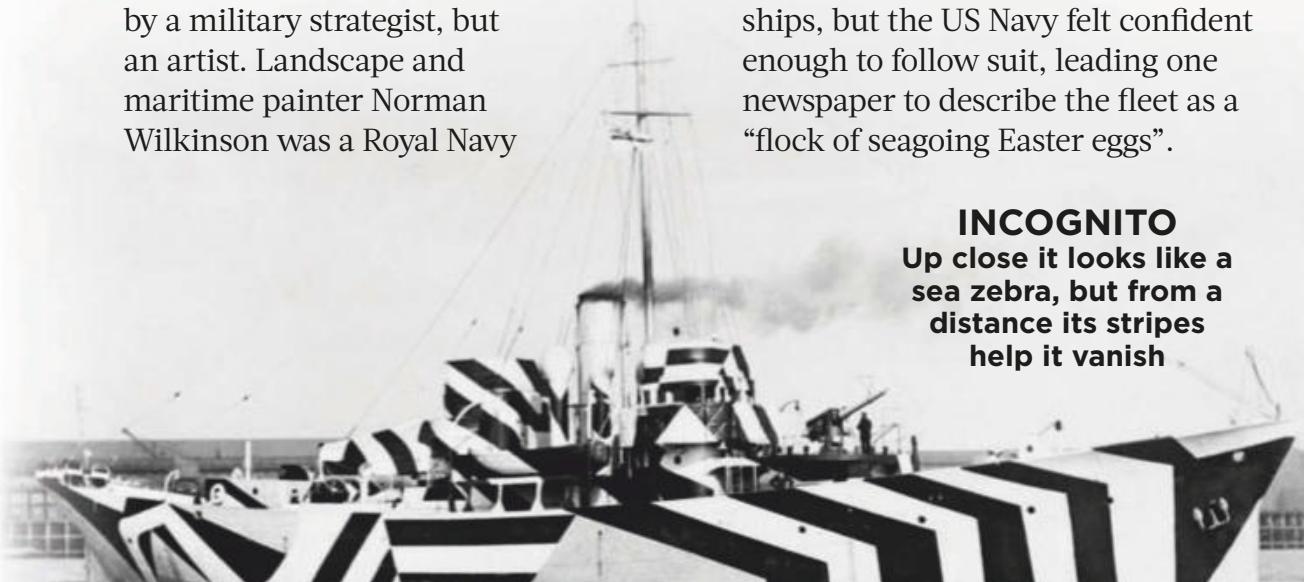
(target) How do you camouflage a ship to make it invisible to the naked eye? Well, during World War I, don't try. Use dazzle camouflage instead.

The idea was that brash and intricate geometric patterns painted in contrasting colours in certain places made it difficult for the enemy to gauge a ship's distance, size, speed and direction. The psychedelic dazzle ships were developed not by a military strategist, but an artist. Landscape and maritime painter Norman Wilkinson was a Royal Navy

volunteer in 1917 when he convinced the Admiralty that breaking up a ship's shape would confuse German U-boats. While hardly a modernist painter, he may have been inspired by cubism, a fact not lost on its founder, Picasso, who took credit for dazzle painting.

Up to 2,000 ships became blank canvases for Wilkinson and his team based at the Royal Academy of Arts. It is difficult to judge the success of dazzle ships, but the US Navy felt confident enough to follow suit, leading one newspaper to describe the fleet as a "flock of seagoing Easter eggs".

INCOGNITO
Up close it looks like a sea zebra, but from a distance its stripes help it vanish



BENDING THE TRUTH
Mulan is a fine example of not letting what actually happened spoil a good (and it is good) story



297
The number of steps to the top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

How historically accurate is Mulan?

(target) Even allowing for the talking dragon, American accents and all that singing, Disney had a lot of history it could have got right with its 1998 animation. Only it didn't.

The story of Hua Mulan, a Chinese woman who took her father's place in the army disguised as a man, appeared in a poem written between the fourth and sixth centuries. Like any good folktale, it has countless iterations, including one where she ends up killing herself to avoid becoming the emperor's concubine.

Disney can't be blamed for leaving that out, and a bunch of low-level anachronisms – such as Mulan eating bacon and eggs for breakfast, writing with 20th-century characters, or giving the emperor a protocol-ignoring hug – should never spoil the fun of the movie.

Where issues arise is that the China depicted seems to be at least a millennium on from the original ballad. The movie opens at the Great Wall, already boasting its 14th-century improvements during the Ming Dynasty, and closes at the Imperial City, which was a long way from being built. The cannon used by the army are too advanced and the coloured fireworks of the climactic celebrations didn't exist until the 19th century.

Then there are the Huns. Of course, Disney needed a villain, but the nomadic people most associated with that name – led by Attila – didn't come to prominence until centuries later. The Han Dynasty did war with a steppe-dwelling tribe called the Xiongu from 133 BC to AD 89, and it has been suggested the Xiongu are the forbears of those Huns. Perhaps that's where the link comes from.



IN LOVE
Though Victoria was smitten, the British public didn't immediately take to Prince Albert

HOW DID VICTORIA AND ALBERT MEET?

Their love is the stuff of a great romance mixed with tragedy. Victoria and Albert were married more-or-less blissfully for nearly 22 years and had nine children, before his untimely death sent the long-reigning queen into mourning for the rest of her life.

Yet, as with many royal relationships, their beginning was not all that romantic. Their shared uncle Leopold – making them cousins – thought it a prudent move to put them together in the hope they'd hit it off.

Luckily for Leo, the 16-year-old Victoria was completely smitten after meeting Albert in 1836. "He is extremely handsome; his hair is about the same

colour as mine; his eyes are large and blue, and he has a beautiful nose and a very sweet mouth with fine teeth," wrote the heir to the throne in her diary. "But the charm of his countenance is his expression, which is most delightful."

Victoria dispatched a letter to Leopold thanking him for "the prospect of great happiness you have contributed to give me". Shortly after Albert arrived for another visit in 1839, she popped the question – she was now queen so he couldn't ask her. And if there were any doubts of Albert reciprocating her intense feelings, consult the letter he wrote after their engagement: "Even in my dreams I never imagined that I should find so much love on Earth."

Who was the last person to be hanged, drawn and quartered?

The gruesome execution for treason might seem a medieval specialty, but it was still dealt out until the Georgian period. As it was changed to (merely) hanging and beheading in 1814, then abolished altogether in 1870, it is thought the last to endure the full horror in England was David Tyrie, a Scottish clerk at the Portsmouth naval office caught giving information to the French.

On 24 August 1782, he hanged for over 20 minutes, then cut down while still alive to have his heart, genitals and head removed. After being quartered, he was buried in a coffin, but immediately dug up so souvenir hunters could claim a piece of him.

4,422

The number of days spent in office by the longest-serving US President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, from 1933-45.

Was El Dorado real?

 Apologies to any treasure-hunting adventurers out there, but the chances of finding a mythical lost city of gold somewhere deep in South America are astronomically slim – not least because the name El Dorado never referred to a city in the first place.

Meaning 'The Gilded One' in Spanish, it was the name given to chieftains of the Muisca tribe, which resided close to modern-day Bogotá in Colombia. On becoming ruler, Muisca chieftains would supposedly daub their naked bodies in gold dust, sail into the middle of Lake Guatavita on an exquisite raft and throw in gold and jewels as offerings.

Stories of untold riches were enough for Spanish conquistadors – and later Sir Walter Raleigh – to plunge into unknown lands in search of gold. Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada took 800 men across the Andes and Francisco de Orellana navigated the Amazon. The gold lust greatly sped up exploration of South America, as well as the subjugation of its peoples. In 1545, the Spanish found and partially drained Lake Guatavita,

revealing hundreds of pieces of gold on the shores, but this couldn't assuage their greed. The gilded one turned into a golden city, and the fruitless search has gone on ever since.



ROYAL RAFT
The Muisca chief made his offerings surrounded by soldiers bearing his banners

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Image by Angela Ithyle

A photograph of a man dressed as a Viking warrior. He is wearing a metallic helmet with a face guard, a chainmail hauberk, and a fur-lined cloak. He is holding a long, curved horn to his mouth and appears to be blowing into it. In his other hand, he holds a wooden staff or spear. The background is blurred, showing other people in similar attire, suggesting a festival or reenactment.

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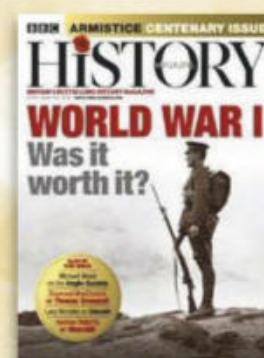
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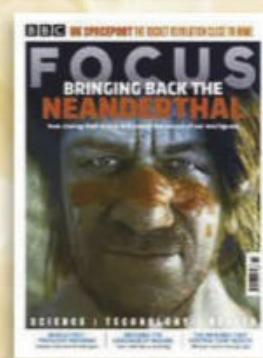
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ON OUR RADAR

A guide to what's happening in the world of history over the coming weeks



ABOVE: The dining room of the museum, which was Dickens' home for two years

LEFT: The author's samovar – an urn to heat water for tea



EXHIBITION

Food, glorious food: Dinner with Dickens

Charles Dickens Museum, London, until 22 April
<https://dickensmuseum.com>

Food plays an important role in the works of Victorian novelist Charles Dickens – from Oliver Twist's pleading for more gruel in the workhouse to the decaying wedding banquet left to rot by the tragic Miss Havisham. This exhibition will explore how Dickens used food as a tool to highlight his belief in social justice. A dinner party at the Dickens household was the place to be in 19th-century London and other famous literary faces were often guests. The museum will take visitors through the preparations of such a feast and reveal how food inspired the great writer.

WHAT'S ON

The close-to-home works of portrait painter Gainsboroughp80



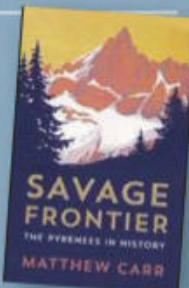
BRITAIN'S TREASURES

Caerphilly Castle.....p84



BOOK REVIEWS

Our look at the best new releases....p86



POSTCARDS FROM THE PAST

Your best photos of historical landmarks...p90



**FESTIVAL**

Up Helly Aa

Lerwick, Shetland, 29 January, [www.shetland.org/
things/events/culture-heritage/up-helly-aa](http://www.shetland.org/things/events/culture-heritage/up-helly-aa)

Shetland will be celebrating its Viking heritage with the annual Up Helly Aa fire festival. Traditionally held on the last Tuesday of January, the festival marks the end of Yule as well as commemorating the Vikings who ruled the islands 1,000 years ago. The celebration – which dates back to the 1800s – sees hundreds of people don their best Viking outfits and parade through the streets with torches, led through the town by the 'Jarl', a coveted position that requires hopefuls to be festival committee members for at least 15 years in order to be chosen. The procession ends with the torches being thrown at a replica Viking galley, with partying and merriment going on into the night.





ABOVE AND RIGHT: Not all soldiers bore guns. Some fought with pikes, whilst others bolstered morale as drummers and banner bearers

BELOW: The date of the battle is known as Holly Holy Day after locals began wearing sprigs to mark the anniversary



ALAMY X3



EVENT

Battle of Nantwich Re-enactment

Nantwich, Cheshire, 26 January,
www.battleofnantwich.org

Royalist and Parliamentarian armies will face each other once more in a re-enactment of the 1644 British Civil Wars battle that ended the siege of the Cheshire town. The Parliamentarian army were the victors of the clash, a major setback to King Charles I's campaign. The re-enactors will parade through the town before heading to Mill Island to recreate the famous battle as well as demonstrate the firepower of their 17th-century muskets.

FILM

The Favourite

In cinemas 1 January

The competing rivalry between two of Queen Anne's ladies-in-waiting is the focus of this new historical drama. Olivia Colman stars as the tragic British queen, with Rachel Weisz taking on the role of her long-time confidant Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough. The introduction of Abigail Masham (Emma Stone) to the royal court causes a chaotic rift between the previously inseparable pair.



Rachel Weisz as Sarah Churchill, who gained power through Anne

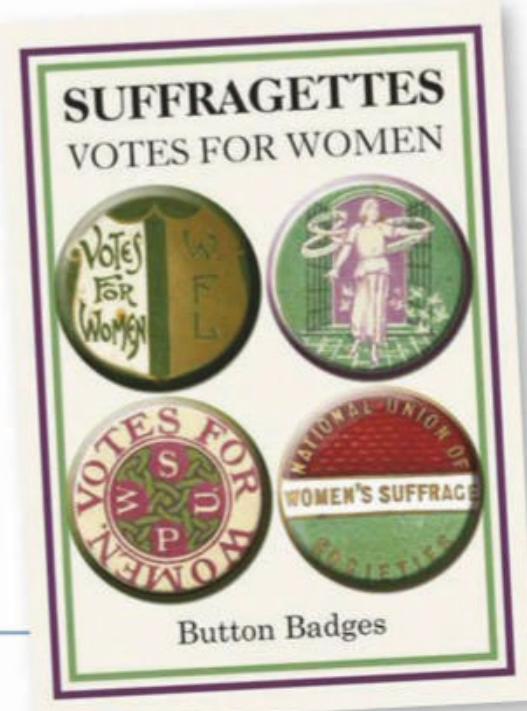
TO BUY

Suffragette Badges

£3.99, Waterstones, bit.ly/2Qsu5L0

Show solidarity with the women who fought for the right to vote a century ago with this set of four badges, featuring campaigning artwork from the time of Emily Davison, the Pankhursts and all the women who struggled for equality in the early 20th century.

Being part of the struggle was a badge of honour for many



'Mary and Margaret Gainsborough, the Artist's Daughters', c1760-61

EXHIBITION

Gainsborough's Family Album

National Portrait Gallery, London, until 3 February, www.npg.org.uk/whatson/gainsborough/exhibition

Thomas Gainsborough was one of the great British portrait artists of the 18th century, remembered for his paintings of the aristocracy and royalty – including those of George III and Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire. But he also enjoyed capturing the likenesses of his own family, works in which he honed his talents. More than 50 of his most beloved family portraits will be on display, charting his rise to fame.

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX XI, ROB MCDOUGALL XI, VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM/LONDON XI

EXHIBITION

Fight for the Castle

Edinburgh Castle, www.edinburghcastle.scot/discover/highlights/fight-for-the-castle

The role of Edinburgh Castle during Scotland's Wars for Independence will be revealed in a new permanent exhibition. As battles raged in the 13th and 14th centuries, the castle often changed hands between Scottish and English forces. As well as medieval artefacts discovered during excavations, a replica trebuchet will also be on display.



► ALSO LOOK OUT FOR

- Burns Night Ceilidh – Enjoy a traditional Scottish celebration aboard the Cutty Sark in London, 25 January. bit.ly/2rdqh22
- Reimagining Ancient Greece – Ancient Greek artefacts are displayed alongside artwork produced by children inspired by them. Belsay Hall, Northumberland, until 24 February. bit.ly/2Pdntvq

**A FIXED POINT IN TIME**

As well as being a bastion for English power in Wales, Caerphilly has played the part of a clone factory, a secret military base and a vampire's lair – it's one of the most frequently used filming locations for *Doctor Who*.

The vast lakes at Caerphilly may have been inspired by those around Kenilworth Castle – Gilbert de Clare had fought there in 1266

BRITAIN'S TREASURES... CAERPHILLY CASTLE, South Wales

Famed for its grand towers and vast moats, Caerphilly is a castle plucked from a child's imagination, and one that ushered in a new age of castle building

GETTING THERE:
Caerphilly is easy to reach from Junction 32 of the M4. Buses run regularly from Cardiff and Caerphilly is served by a train station.



OPENING TIMES AND PRICES:
Monday to Saturday 10am-4pm, Sunday 11am-4pm, until 28 February; daily 9.30-5pm from 1 March to 30 June; daily 9.30-6pm from 1 July to 31 August. Adults £8.50, children £5.10, free for CADW members.

FIND OUT MORE:
<https://cadw.gov.wales/dayout/caerphilly-castle>

Caerphilly is famous for two things – a crumbly cheese and the impressive castle that dominates the town. The latter has been a formidable presence for almost 750 years. It's the largest in Wales with 30 acres of grounds, and the second largest in Britain, trumped only by Windsor.

Beyond its looming towers and grand gatehouses, Caerphilly stands apart for its waterways – it's built on an artificial island, surrounded by still-full moats – and for its walls. Its construction is considered to have brought the concentric castle to Britain,

and it would form the template for the 'iron ring' of fortifications that Edward I would later raise to control Wales, including Beaumaris and Harlech.

It was built by 13th-century noble Gilbert de Clare, the Lord of Glamorgan, an influential Marcher Lord also known as the Red Earl on account of his red hair (and, perhaps, a fiery temper in battle). He felt that he needed to strengthen his control over the region, and that a castle at Caerphilly, at the time just a small community, was the way to do it. It would also prevent the Welsh Prince, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd,

from moving farther south – he'd been taking advantage of the civil war between Henry III and his barons to gain territory back from the English.

Timber palisades and dams were swiftly thrown up in 1268, yet this work was in vain. Ap Gruffudd realised the difficulties the castle might pose and, in 1270, burned it to the ground.

Work began anew. By this time, Henry III had become concerned and so sent two of his bishops to take possession of the castle. By 1272, de Clare's men had seized back control, and they completed the initial phase of



WHAT TO LOOK FOR...



DRAGON'S LAIR

This exciting new family attraction is home to the castle's dragons – discover their epic tale amongst smoke and a dramatic light and sound show.



SIEGE ENGINES

Replica 13th-century siege engines like these trebuchets are on display, allowing visitors to see the threats Caerphilly had to defend against.



GREAT HALL

This would have been a grand room with decorative furnishings and an elegant fireplace. Medieval carvings still survive that may depict Edward II's court.



THE MOATS

Caerphilly Castle has some formidable defences – the crowning glory of which are its moats and artificial lakes, intended to make invasion impossible.



LEANING TOWER

Pisa isn't the only place with a leaning tower. Caerphilly's southeast lookout leans ominously – thought to be due to subsidence, but locals blame Oliver Cromwell's army.

“In 1539, it was little more than a ruin in marshland”

building by 1275. In 1277, Edward I began his conquest of Wales. Llywelyn was killed in battle in 1282 – ending independent rule in Wales.

WAR AT THE DOOR

Caerphilly's defences would be put to the test during Madog ap Llywelyn's 1294 revolt. The rebellion's local leader in Glamorgan, Morgan ap Maredudd, had lost his lands to de Clare, and so sought retribution by assaulting Caerphilly. The town was badly damaged, but the castle stood resolute, as it did again in 1316 during Llywelyn Bren revolt against Edward II. When his estranged wife Isabella of France invaded England with her lover in 1326, it was to Caerphilly that

Edward II fled – by this time the castle was in the hands of Gilbert's daughter Eleanor, who had married one of the King's favourites, Hugh le Despenser.

By 1486, the castle had passed into the hands of Jasper Tudor, uncle of Henry VII, but played second fiddle to the emerging castle at Cardiff. Caerphilly Castle fell into decline, the lakes were drained and some of the stone stolen to build houses. When antiquarian John Leland visited in 1539, he recorded that it was little more than an echo of its former self, a ruin surrounded by marshland.

The turmoil of the British Civil Wars would see violence visit the doorstep of Caerphilly again in the mid-17th century. South Wales

remained mainly sympathetic to the Royalist cause, and it's possible that Oliver Cromwell ordered the castle to be 'slighted' (that is, deliberately damaged) to prevent it being used as a Royalist stronghold.

The Bute family acquired the castle in 1776, with the fourth Marquess, John Crichton-Stuart, undertaking a major conservation project and ensuring the castle was surveyed. In 1950, the castle was turned over to the government and the lakes were reflooded to return its former glory. The latest renovations were completed in 2018 as part of a £9.5 million investment into Welsh heritage sites – with additions including a 'dragon's lair' and an interactive maze.

WHY NOT VISIT...

Leave the castle for plusher surrounds – or go underground

BIG PIT NATIONAL COAL MUSEUM

A working mine for more than 100 years, Big Pit tells of Wales's industrial heritage. Visitors can tour the mine shaft underground.
<https://museum.wales/bigpit>

TREDEGAR HOUSE

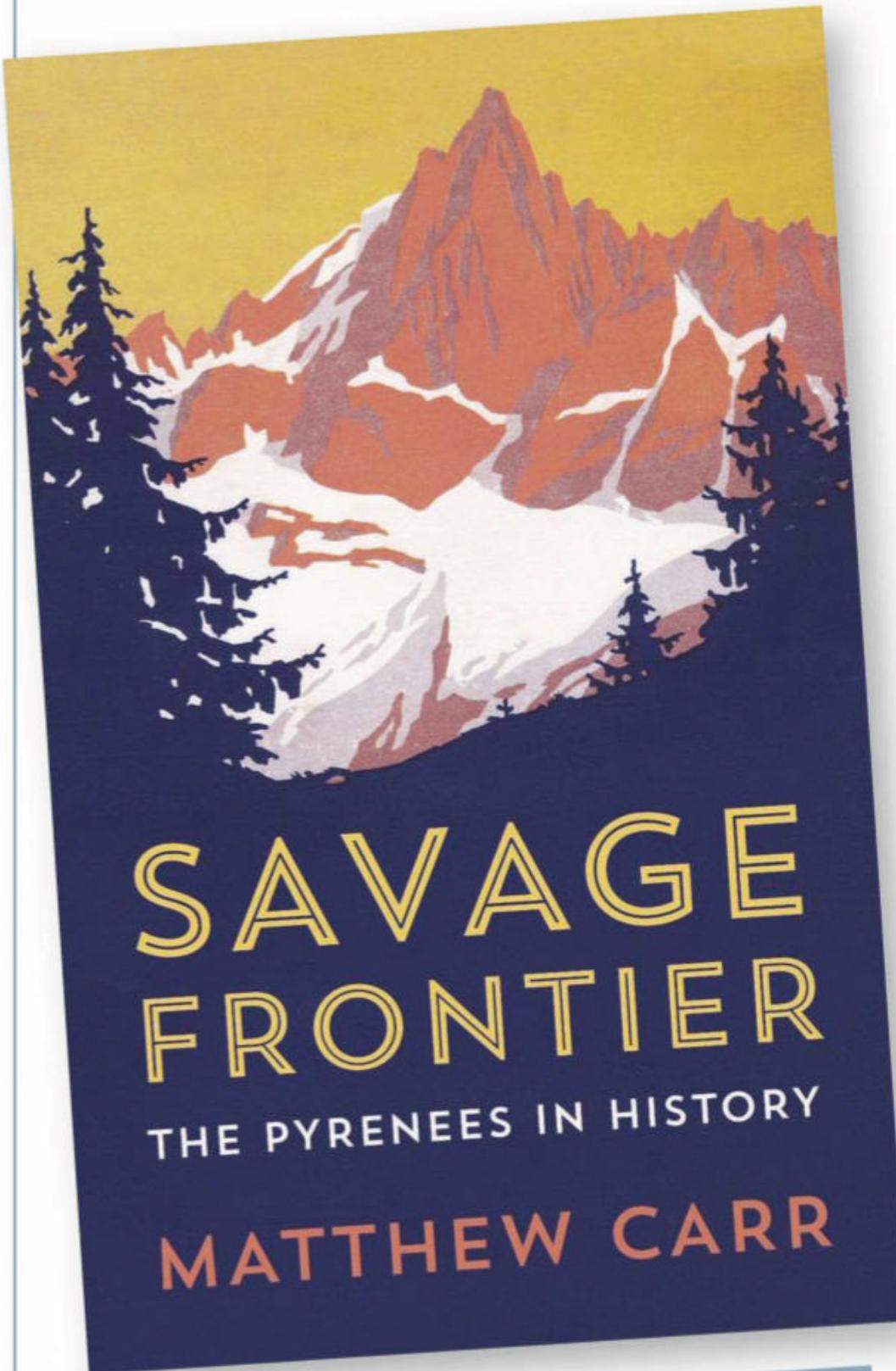
This beautiful 17th-century manor was once home to the influential Morgan family, later Lords Tredegar.
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/tredegar-house

LLANCAIACH FAWR MANOR

Once a Tudor manor that hosted kings, this is now a living history museum and is supposedly haunted.
<https://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/llancaiachfawr>

BOOKS

This month's best historical reads



THE PYRENEES IN HISTORY

MATTHEW CARR

“Packed with drama, peril and ambition, these stories offer glimpses into how the physical world has shaped life in Europe across the centuries”

BOOK
OF THE
MONTH

Savage Frontier: The Pyrenees in History

By Matthew Carr

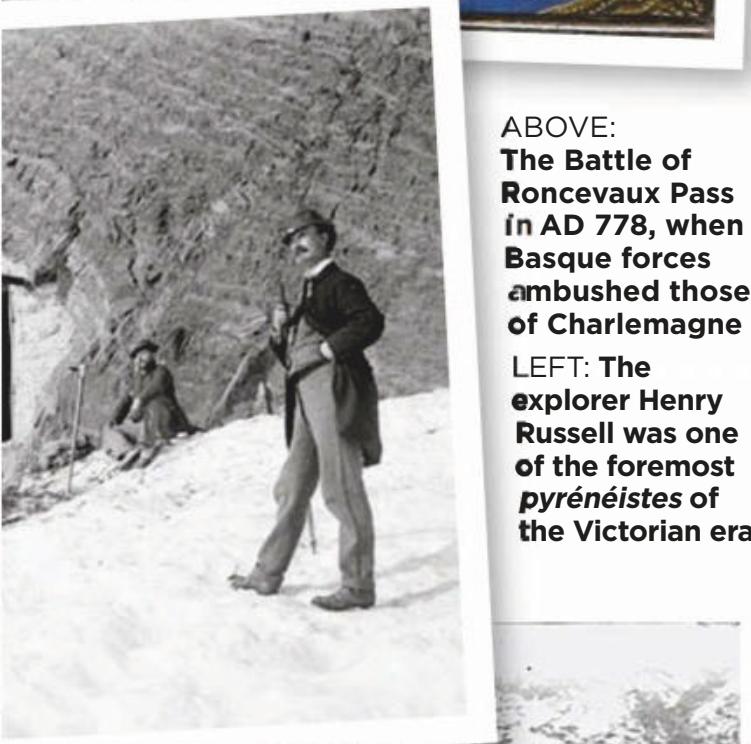
C Hurst & Co, £20, hardback, 320 pages

Stretching more than 300 miles along the border between France and Spain, the Pyrenees can be forbidding, with usable routes through the granite and limestone peaks often only available at high altitudes. Despite this, generations of travellers have made their way across the mountain range in search of freedom and safety. This new history of the Pyrenees is, therefore, far from the dry geographical study you might suspect; instead, it's packed with drama, peril and ambition. From people seeking religious sanctuary to those fleeing the horrors of Nazi-occupied France, their stories offer glimpses into how the physical world shaped life in Europe across the centuries.



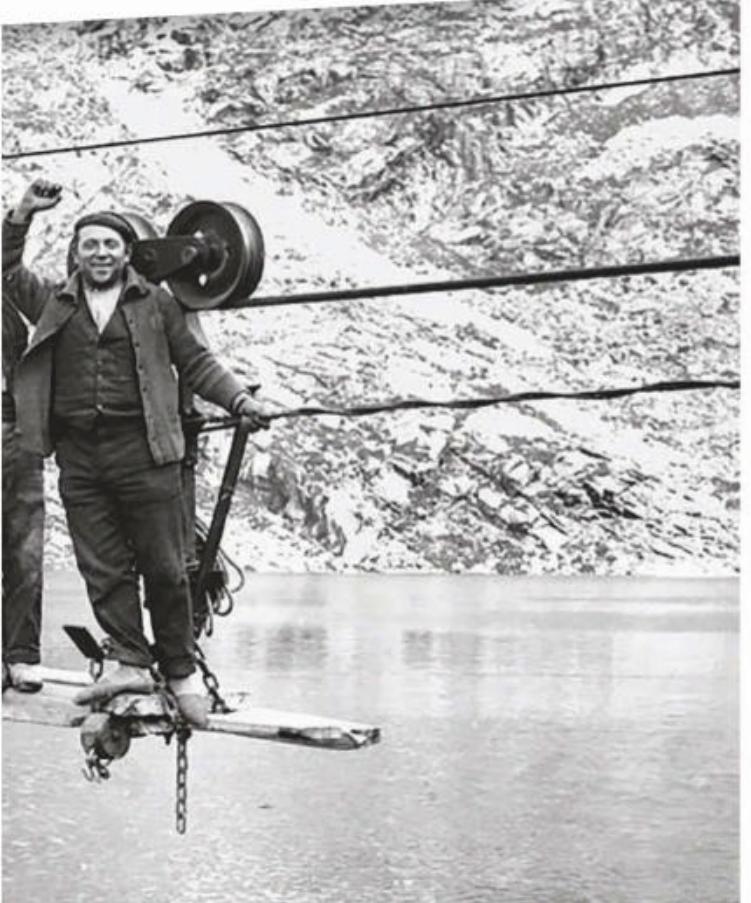
Workers involved in the construction of a hydroelectric plant on Lake Gento, one of many projects that aimed to harness the Pyrenees' natural resources





ABOVE:
The Battle of
Roncevaux Pass
in AD 778, when
Basque forces
ambushed those
of Charlemagne

LEFT: The
explorer Henry
Russell was one
of the foremost
pyrénéistes of
the Victorian era



MEET THE AUTHOR

Matthew Carr tells us why he chose to write a book about the history of a mountain range, and explains why the Pyrenees remains such a captivating region to research

Why write a book focusing on this specific geographical region?

I've always wanted to write a book about landscape, and about the role that certain landscapes play in the human imagination. I'm fascinated by the way that borders are imagined as hard, sharp lines of division between countries and cultures, and the complex interactions that you find when you look more closely at the borderlands through which they run. The history of the Pyrenees is filled with these contradictions.

What kinds of people made a journey over the Pyrenees? Are there any stories that particularly stand out for you?

Monks, pilgrims, soldiers, scientists, refugees, poets, artists, exiles, Nazi mystics – the history of the Pyrenees overflows with so many striking characters and incidents that you're spoiled for things to write about. Some of the most dramatic episodes concerned the journeys made by the escaping soldiers and refugees who crossed the Pyrenees from France to Spain during World War II. I walked some of the routes they took, and was constantly moved by the obstacles they tried – and sometimes failed – to overcome, and by the unquenchable desire for life and freedom that led them to undertake these journeys.

What perception did people outside the Pyrenees have of the region?

For much of their history, the Pyrenees were imagined by the outside world as a *frontière sauvage*: a wild frontier, firstly between Moorish Spain and Latin Christendom, and later as a physical border between Spain and France. People variously pictured them as

a forbidding mountain wilderness with no intrinsic value, and the gateway to an 'African' Spain that was simultaneously threatening and exotic. It wasn't until the late 18th century that scientists, explorers, adventurers and tourists began to 'discover' the Pyrenean landscape, and transmitted more appealing images of the landscape and its people to the outside world.

Do all of these stories help us understand the history of this particular part of Europe more generally?



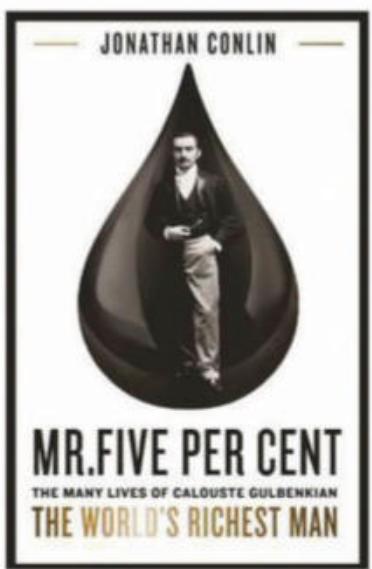
I hope so! If you look at the many people who have visited the Pyrenees and crossed them for one reason or another, you inevitably find not just a microcosm of European history, but a rich and complex Pyrenean history that has too often been ignored by clichés and stereotypes handed down through posterity.

"This is one of the world's most beguiling and fascinating landscapes, with its own history, culture and traditions"

Why has this story not been more broadly told? And how do you hope your book will change people's perceptions about the region?

Histories of mountain ranges tend to be dominated by climbers' tales, references to iconic peaks and so on. The Pyrenees do have such elements, but the fact that they pale in comparison with the Alps or the Himalayas means that kind of

interest has generally been absent. The history of the Pyrenees has tended to appear – when it appears at all – as an adjunct of the histories of the two great states on either side of them. I hope my book will give readers a greater appreciation of the role the Pyrenees have played in world history, and also as one of the world's most beguiling and fascinating landscapes, with its own history, culture, languages and traditions.

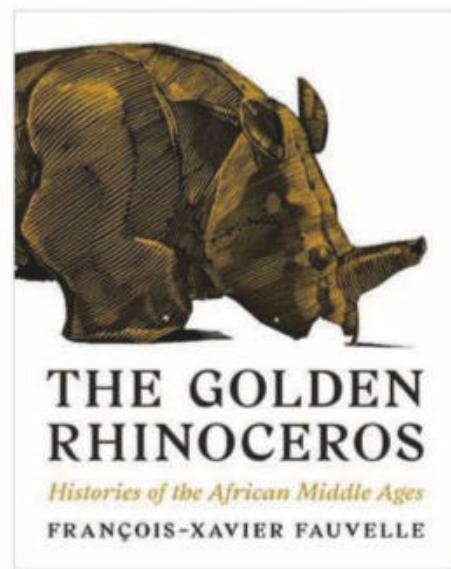


Mr Five Per Cent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the World's Richest Man

By Jonathan Conlin

Profile Books, £25, hardback, 416 pages

Calouste Gulbenkian packed a lot into his life. The first man to exploit oil in Iraq, he shrewdly managed his businesses and, by the time he died at the age of 86 in 1955, his wealth was unparalleled, as was his art collection. *Mr Five Per Cent* is an engaging biography of a truly larger-than-life character.

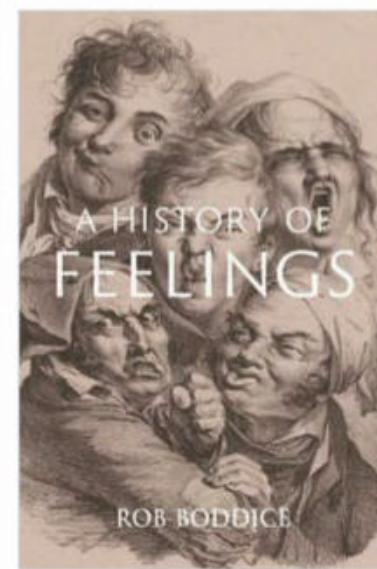


The Golden Rhinoceros: Histories of the African Middle Ages

By François-Xavier Fauvelle

Princeton University Press, £24, hardback, 280 pages

We often think of the Middle Ages solely in terms of the familiar icons from European history: knights, castles and such. But it was an era in which Africa was equally vibrant, bustling with traders, kings, merchants and diplomats. Featuring stories from around the continent, this is a useful corrective to the outdated idea of a land ‘without history’.

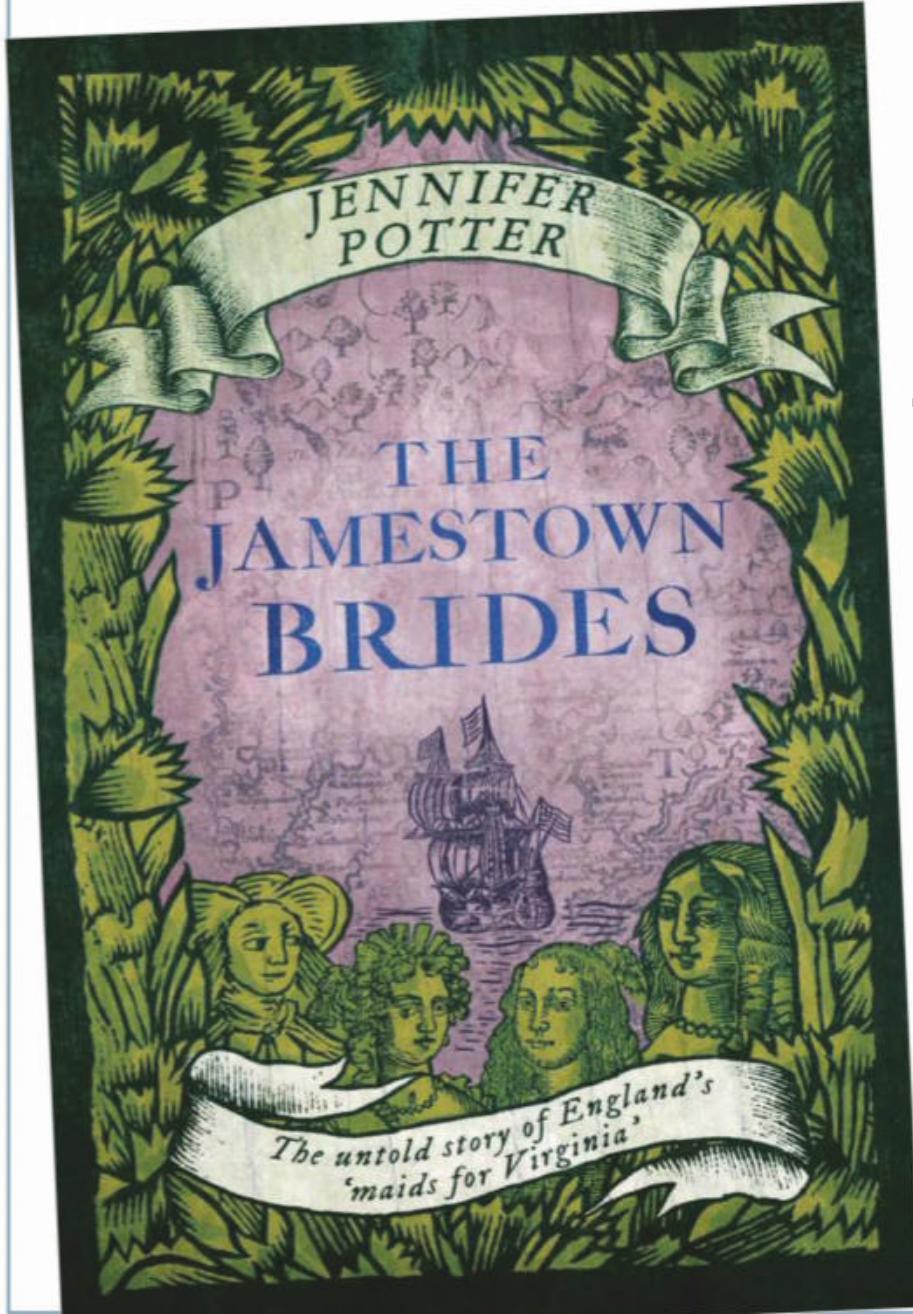


A History of Feelings

By Rob Boddice

Reaktion Books, £25, hardback, 240 pages

To what extent are the things that we feel – happiness, sadness, anger – the result of the world around us? How much would the emotions of someone from, say, the 17th century, be recognisable to us today 400 years on? These are the kind of fascinating, if complex, questions posed by this original and ambitious book, which combines the latest research to explore centuries of feelings and how they related to wider society across centuries and continents.



The Jamestown Brides: The Untold Story of England's 'Maids for Virginia'

By Jennifer Potter

Atlantic, £20, hardback, 384 pages

What do you do if your new colony has plenty of men and land, but not enough women? You advertise for wives, of course! That was the solution the Virginia Company of London came up with in the 1620s, and this compelling account explores the extraordinary stories of the women who answered the call, why they did so, and their lives on the other side of the Atlantic.

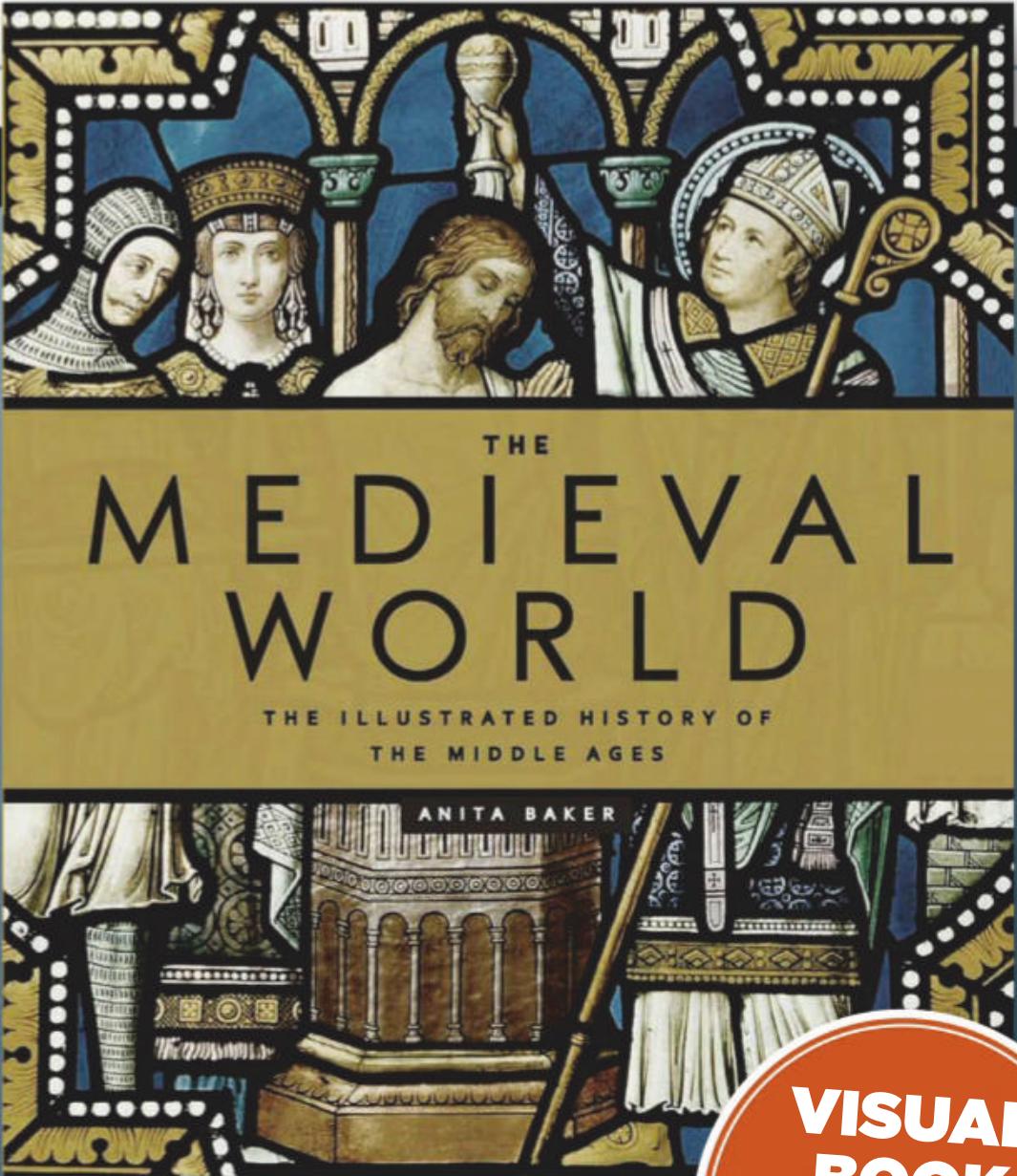


Great Britain's Railways: A New History

By Colin G Maggs

Amberley, £25, hardback, 464 pages

Take a whistle-stop tour through Britain's long relationship with its railways with this detailed but accessible guide. It's a longer history than you may expect, too, embarking during the early years of the 17th century with a gauge railway constructed near Nottingham. From there it runs all the way through centuries of technological innovation and human ingenuity, mixing technical detail with social history and two sections of evocative images.



The Medieval World: The Illustrated History of the Middle Ages

By Anita Baker

Andre Deutsch, £20, hardback, 160 pages

This elegantly produced overview of the Middle Ages achieves the tricky feat of balancing a visual history with a detailed, fascinating narrative. Split into sections exploring themes such as daily life, religion, and warfare, its selection of paintings, maps and illuminations is astutely chosen to highlight the main points of the text. The result is a valuable insight into what medieval life would really have been like – and a reminder of how beautiful such documents often were.

“A valuable insight into what medieval life was really like”



The Medieval World combines visually striking material with a deeply informative narrative

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LOCHINDORB CASTLE, SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

“ I visited Lochindorb on a bird-watching trip and took this photo of this ruined medieval castle on an island in the centre of the loch. In the 14th century, it was the stronghold of the ‘Wolf of Badenoch’ – Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan. He was a son of Robert II of Scotland and was remembered as intensely cruel. It struck me that this sounded like something out of *Game of Thrones*. ”

Taken by: Andrew Kerwick-Crisp, via email

GERMAN UNDERGROUND HOSPITAL, GUERNSEY

“ The underground hospital on Guernsey is an eerie World War II relic. It is an impressive, cavernous tunnel system, built for the occupying Nazis through forced labour. The local volunteers who run the place will happily tell tales passed down from the era. I liked the fact it wasn’t really preserved – just slowly decaying. ”

Taken by: Helen Sharp, via email

FEELING INSPIRED?

Send your snaps to us and we'll feature a selection every issue.
photos@historyrevealed.com

READERS' LETTERS

Get in touch – share your opinions on history and our magazine

A STAR IS BORN

At time of writing, I am reading the American Revolutionary War article in issue 61 and note the story regarding the number of points the stars should have on the US flag – I'm glad it added "possibly apocryphal". This triggered a memory of visiting the parish church of Steeple in Dorset.

"The number of points on the stars would seem to have been set long before the flag"

In the church porch, cut in stone, is a coat of arms derived from the quartering of the arms of the Lawrence family of Steeple and the Washingtons – ancestors of

LETTER OF THE MONTH

George Washington. This carving clearly displays the stars as having five points. According to George Osborn's 1986 book *Dorset Curiosities*,

George Washington wore their arms on his signet ring, thus the number of points on the stars would seem to have been set long before the flag was designed. The stripes of said flag

NEW HEIGHTS OF FINE DINING

I always look forward to seeing your black and white photos every month. I wonder whether the men looking on here (*below*) were given something

to eat as well? It's a great photo and did make me smile.

Elaine Robinson

A LOST BATTLE

What an excellent feature from Julian Humphrys on the battle

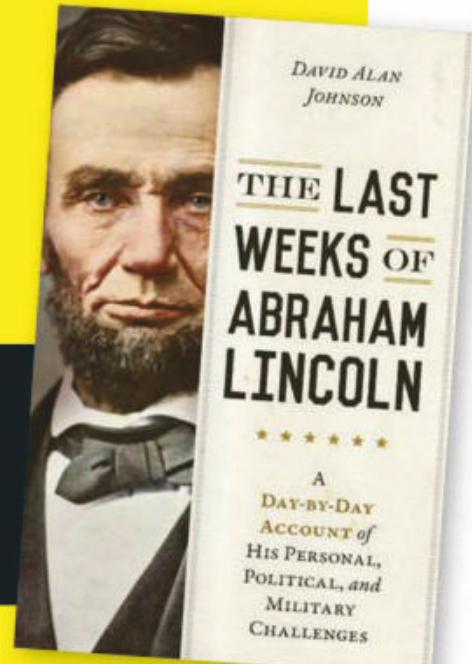


would seem to be derived from the same coat of arms.

I love the magazine (I have every copy from issue one) and enjoy reading it each month.

Paula Aubrey, Birmingham

Paula wins a hardback copy of *The Last Weeks of Abraham Lincoln* by David Alan Johnson, a day-by-day retelling of the period from his second inaugural address on 4 March 1865 through to his fateful trip to Ford's Theatre on the night of 14 April



for Britain's battlefields (issue 62). I felt saddened by the news about the decision to allow part of Bosworth to be built on.

As a member of Richard III Society, my fellow members and I were fighting a battle as well, to prevent the building project from happening. Our chairman, Dr Phil Stone, was present at the decision meeting but had only two minutes to stand the ground and explain why this project is utter lunacy.

The site brings communities, families, tourists and historians together. We can only hope that such fate won't repeat itself at the other battlefields.

Dr R Pacak,
via email

THE HIGH LIFE
Two steel workers enjoy a vertigo-inducing lunch above New York in the 1930s

BANNER OF SUPPORT

Excellent article on the importance of preserving battlefields in the magazine (issue 62) by Julian Humphrys of The Battlefields Trust. Couldn't agree more.

Louise Whittaker

LIFE IMITATES ART

The mention of RMS Titanic in the bizarre coincidences Top Ten (issue 62) reminded me of the 1898 novella *The Wreck of the Titan: Or, Futility* by Morgan Robertson. In addition to the names, there are other uncanny similarities between the ships. The Titan was an ocean liner which, like the Titanic in 1912, sank in April after hitting an iceberg on its starboard side in the North Atlantic about 400 nautical miles from Newfoundland. Also like the Titanic, The Titan did



not have enough lifeboats for all those on board.

✉ Barrie Vinten,
Rugby

RUTHLESS WARLORD, FRIENDLY TAX MAN?

I loved the article on Genghis Khan in the November issue. The Great Khan has been of great interest to me since reading *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World* by Jack Weatherford.

Genghis Khan knew more about human emotions and motivations than folks who have spent their entire lives in study. He killed the aristocracy and elite in the lands that he conquered because he knew they would never submit to being ruled by others. He also used propaganda to his benefit, by sending survivors from a conquered city to the next city to tell how futile it was to resist the Mongol invaders – creating an illusion of invincibility for

BRUTAL AND BLOODTHIRSTY

Genghis Khan's concept of mercy was executing a former friend by breaking his back instead of boiling him alive

his army. He also would not unleash his cavalry fully upon a city unless they refused to respect his authority; if they harmed his emissaries he would utterly destroy it.

The Great Khan would only demand a tribute of 10 per cent from the conquered territory for continued protection and administration under his reign. If only governments today would be satisfied with 10 per cent!

✉ Greg R Snyder,
Colorado, US

US AS WELL!!

Love this magazine!! Can never wait to read it each month. The best!!!

✉ Joanne Trounce

HIDDEN FIGURES

In her Your History feature (issue 63), Cathy Newman discusses an unknown but fascinating character in Beatrice Shilling. That

QUEEN BEA
Beatrice Shilling
fixed a fatal flaw in
Britain's Spitfires

she made a very distinct and worthwhile contribution to the outcome of the Battle of Britain cannot be in doubt – she at the very least deserves recognition. I am eager to read the book Newman has just written and understand why these people have been "hidden from history".

From mill girls such as the Rochdale vocalist Gracie Fields to air aviators such as Jean Batten, in the past 50 years a number of female trailblazers have emerged out of the shadows of obscurity to the glow of prominence.

Whichever way this came about, it is a positive step forward on the road to assess and evaluate the contribution these characters made to the society we have in this present age.

✉ Duncan McVee,
via email

Editor replies: In that case Duncan, you might be interested in our Amazing Women special edition, which delves deeper into the lives of women like Beatrice Shilling – it's in stores now.

ARE YOU A WINNER?

The lucky winners of the crossword from issue 61 are:

Barry Vinten, Rugby
Tony Herbert, Leicester
Charlotte Priestman, Reigate

Congratulations! You've each won a copy of Jeremy Black's **Mapping Shakespeare** in hardback.

HISTORY
REVEALED Bringing the past to life

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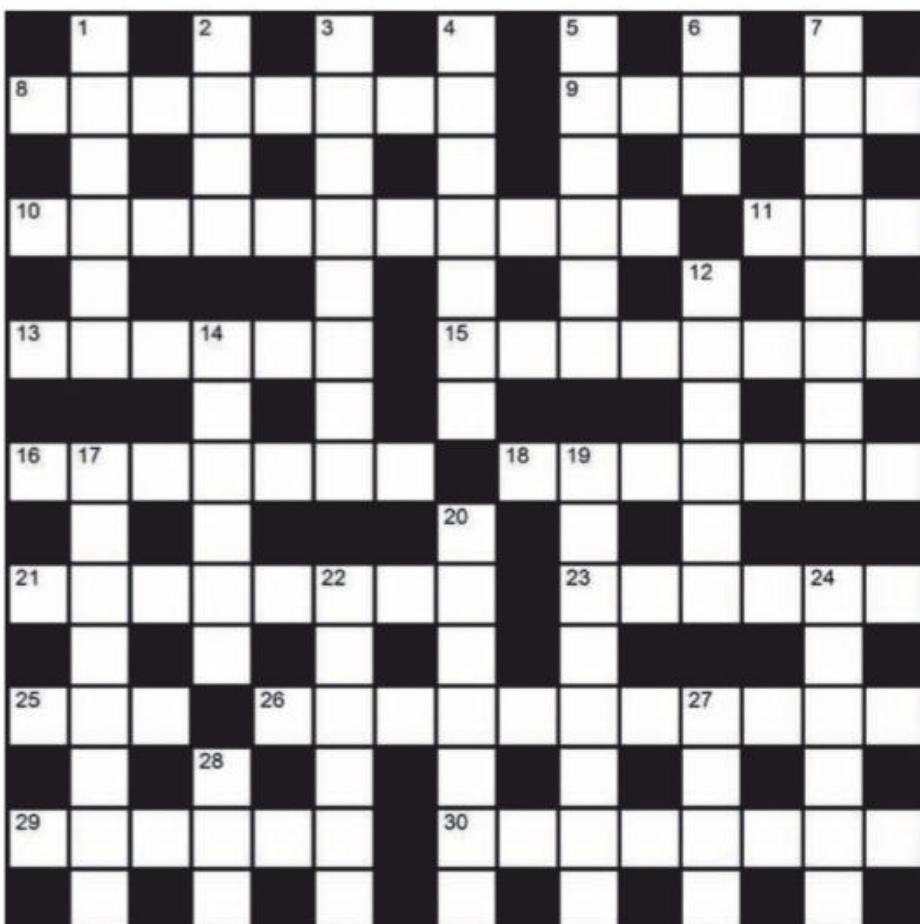
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CROSSWORD N° 64

Test your history knowledge to solve our prize puzzle – and you could win a fantastic new book

Set by Richard Smyth



ACROSS

- 8** Christian saint, martyred in Carthage in AD 203 (8)
- 9** Second book of the Old Testament (6)
- 10** New York hip-hop group formed in 1986 (6,5)
- 11** In Christian legend, the first woman (3)
- 13** Breed of hunting dog, now extinct (6)
- 15** Region of France stormed by the Allies in June 1944 (8)
- 16** In Greek myth, the daughter of King Minos, abandoned by Theseus on Naxos (7)
- 18** Georgian city, formerly the seat of the Imperial Viceroy (7)
- 21** Queen Consort of William IV, after whom a city was named (8)

23 Anna ___ (1820–78), author of *Black Beauty* (1877) (6)

25 Adventure novel by H Rider Haggard, serialised 1886–87 (3)

26 1925 novel by Virginia Woolf (3,8)

29 *The ___ Eunuch*, work of 1970 by Germaine Greer (6)

30 ___ Vye, heroine of Thomas Hardy's novel *The Return Of The Native* (1878) (8)

DOWN

- 1** Monstrous snake-haired female in Greek myth (6)
- 2** German automobile manufacturer, founded in 1862 (4)
- 3** City on the Tees, linked to Darlington by the first steam railway in 1825 (8)

CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

The competition is open to all UK residents (inc. Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Co Bristol Ltd employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering, participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry per person.

The closing date and time is as shown under **How to Enter**, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *History Revealed*) will only ever use personal details for the purposes of administering this competition, and will not publish them or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy.

The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 28 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the

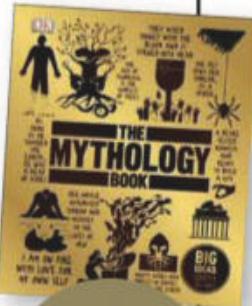
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by noon on **1 February 2019**. By

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SOLUTION N° 62



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REVEALED Bringing the past to life

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During the landing of its second transatlantic crossing, the German Zeppelin airship *Hindenburg* – the largest aircraft ever built – bursts into flames. Thirty-five of the 97 people on board are killed, as is a member of the ground crew. The disaster at Lakehurst is blamed on a gas leak, although rumours of anti-Nazi sabotage soon spread.

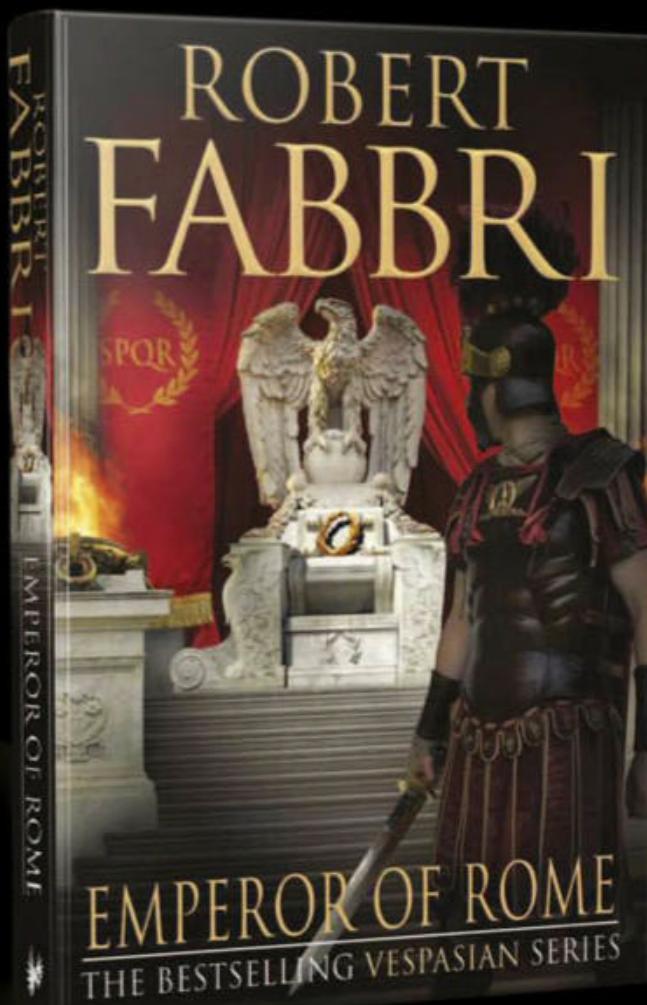


MURRAY BECKER/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

ROME, AD 68

An empire on the brink of collapse...
A hero forged in the flames of battle...
A legend born.

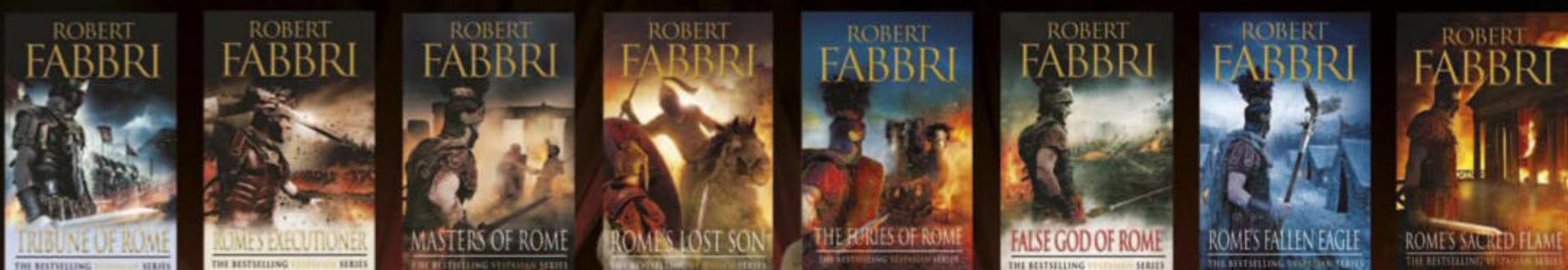
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